B"H

LIKKUTEI SICHOS

On the weekly Torah readings and holidays

Volume 25 | Chayei Sarah | Sichah 3

לקוטי שיחות
PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ETERNAL PEOPLE, AN ETERNAL CROWN

From the Talks of
The Lubavitcher Rebbe
Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson

© Copyright by Sichos In English 2026 ~ 5787

General Editor:
Rabbi Zalmy Avtzon

SIE

Your feedback is appreciated — please share your thoughts at info@projectlikkuteisichos.org

1.

Avraham and David: Choosing a Successor

Halachah requires that the *haftarah* read with each *parshah* "relate to the subject of the *parshah*."[1] More specifically, it must "reflect the conclusion of the *parshah*."[2]

The straightforward connection between our *parshah*, *Chayei Sarah*, and its *haftarah*[3] is that the *haftarah* recounts events in David's life and the actions he took when he was "old, advanced in days."[4] Similarly, much of the *parshah* concerns the period when "Avraham was old, advanced in days."[5]

The parallel, however, goes beyond the **stage of life** at which these events occurred — when Avraham and David were both "old, advanced in days." The events themselves also follow a similar pattern.

The *haftarah* tells of two of David's sons, Adoniyahu and Shlomo. Adoniyahu "exalted himself, saying, 'I will be king.'"[6] The events that followed led David to swear to Bas Sheva that {he would fulfill} his earlier oath: "Shlomo your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place." {David declared,} "So will I do this very day."[7]

This parallels the account in the *parshah* concerning Avraham's two sons, Yitzchak and Yishmael. Yishmael claimed that he was greater (more beloved) than Yitzchak,[8] yet Avraham designated Yitzchak as his heir. He also took care to arrange Yitzchak's marriage,[9] going so far as {to give him everything he owned to help secure the marriage}: "Avraham gave all that he had to Yitzchak."[10] By contrast, "to the sons of the concubines… Avraham gave gifts, and **sent them away** from his son Yitzchak while he was still alive."[11]

---

1) *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch* (as well as the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*), *Orach Chayim*, beginning of sec. 284; *Tur* and *Rema*, ibid., end of sec. 428 (par. 8).

2) See *Beis Yosef* on *Tur, Orach Chayim*, sec. 283, citing *Tosafos*, *Megillah* 23a, s.v. *Keivan*. See also the corresponding discussion in the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*.

3) See also *Kesser Shem Tov* (Gagin), p. 406.

4) *I Melachim* 1:1.

5) *Bereishis* 24:1.

6) *I Melachim* 1:5.

7) Ibid., v. 30. The straightforward meaning of the verses is that Shlomo would reign during David's lifetime. See ibid., vv. 34, 39, 46, and 50ff. See also *Malbim*, ad loc., vv. 46, 48, 51, and elsewhere. See as well footnote 23 below. See the extended discussion in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 30, p. 97ff.

8) *Sanhedrin* 89b and elsewhere. See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 25, p. 97ff., and the sources cited there.

9) In contrast to Yishmael, for whom "his **mother** took a wife from the land of Egypt" (*Bereishis* 21:21).

10) *Bereishis* 25:5 and Rashi's commentary. *Bereishis* 24:36 states, "He gave him all that he had," on which Rashi comments: "He showed them a deed of gift." See also Rashi ad loc., v. 10.

11) Ibid., 25:6.

Similarly, the conclusion of the *parshah* describes Yishmael's descendants {as nations of their own,} without linking them to Avraham: "These are their names by their open settlements and their fortified cities, twelve princes according to their nations."[12] This parallels what had happened to Yishmael himself, concerning whom it was said, "Drive out…."

To put the connection somewhat differently: Just as David chose his younger son over his older son to carry on his kingship,[13] Avraham's younger son, Yitzchak, was chosen to carry on the house of Avraham. The other children were excluded {from this role}, including the family of his older son, Yishmael. They settled in their own "open settlements and fortified cities," as "twelve princes according to their nations," and "dwelt from Chavilah to Shur…" — without a connection to Avraham.

One question remains, however.

The *parshah* also recounts what happened after Avraham's passing: "After Avraham's death, Hashem blessed Yitzchak his son…."[14] Why, then, does the *haftarah* not include the subsequent verses describing Shlomo's anointing and relating that "Shlomo also sat on the royal throne"?[15]

2.

Inherited Kingship and Anointing

On the surface, we may suggest that the *haftarah* does not continue with the account of Shlomo's anointing because this follows Rambam's understanding of the anointing of a king whose father was also a king — including Shlomo's anointing.

The *Gemara* states:[16]

> *A king whose father was a king is not anointed. If you ask why Shlomo was anointed, [the Gemara answers], because of the dispute raised by Adoniyahu.*

The *Gemara* then asks:

> *How do we know that anointing is required when there is a dispute, and that a king cannot simply bequeath the kingship to whichever son he wishes? Rav Pappa said: The verse states, "He and his sons in the midst of Israel" — when there is peace in Israel.*

12) Ibid., v. 16.

13) See sec. 7 below and the sources cited in footnote 23.

14) *Bereishis* 25:11.

15) *I Melachim* 1:46.

16) *Horayos* 11b; *Kerisus* 5b.

Rashi explains:[17]

> *When there is peace in Israel, the kingship is inherited, and anointing is not required. But when there is a dispute, it is not inherited, and anointing is required at the outset.*

Rambam, however, rules:[18]

> *A king whose father was a king is not anointed, for kingship is the king's inheritance for all time…. If there is a dispute, he is anointed to resolve the dispute and to make known to everyone that he alone is king, as Shlomo was anointed because of the dispute raised by Adoniyahu….*

As the later authorities explain,[19] Rashi and Rambam differ on the following point: According to Rashi, the kingship ceases to be inherited, so the anointing serves to establish a new king. According to Rambam, the inheritance of the kingship is neither nullified nor even altered.[20] The anointing serves only "to resolve the dispute" — to remove an **additional** obstacle {to an inheritance that remains intact}.

This helps us appreciate Rambam's practice[21] of concluding the *haftarah* with the verse, "May my lord, King David, live forever,"[22] **without** mentioning Shlomo's anointing. According to Rambam, anointing a king whose father was a king does not confer kingship; it serves only "to resolve the dispute."

The account of Shlomo's anointing is therefore not included. David's oath — "The king swore… 'Just as I swore to you by Hashem, the G-d of Israel, saying, "Shlomo your son will reign after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place," so will I do this very day'" — definitively establishes who will carry on the kingship.[23]

---

17) Rashi on *Kerisus*, ad loc., s.v. *Bizman*. See also Rashi on *Horayos*, ad loc., s.v. *Yerushah*.

18) *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* 1:11. See also the similar wording at the end of ch. 1 of *Hilchos Melachim* (discussed below in the main text); Rambam's Commentary on the Mishnah, beginning of *Kerisus*.

19) See *Shaalos U'Teshuvos Divrei Nechemiah*, *Even HaEzer*, sec. 48; *Shaalos U'Teshuvos Avnei Nezer*, *Yoreh Deah* 312:2ff.; *Tzafnas Pane'ach* in various places, collected in *Tzafnas Pane'ach HaMelukat*, *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash*, ad loc.; and elsewhere.

20) One practical difference may be whether he brings the sin-offering prescribed for a *nasi* (king).

21) In the order of prayers at the end of *Sefer Ahavah*. This is also the practice according to several other customs; see the sources cited in footnote 24.

22) Rambam's text omits the word "David."

23) See *Tzafnas Pane'ach*, loc. cit., and *Tzafnas Pane'ach al HaTorah*, in the commentary on the *haftarah* of our *parshah*, which discuss how the oath could be effective. See also the verses cited in sec. 7 below, indicating that this was in accordance with prophecy; *Chiddushei Aggados Maharsha* on *Horayos*, ad loc., end of s.v. *Ve'es Yehoachaz*; *Shaalos U'Teshuvos Divrei Nechemiah*, loc. cit. Toward the end of that responsum, the author writes: "It appears that Shlomo received the kingship immediately, during David's lifetime." See footnote 7 above.

Other customs, by contrast, continue the *haftarah*[24] with David's command to anoint Shlomo, through the account of the actual anointing.[25] Avudraham's custom[26] goes further still, prescribing that the reading continue through the events following David's passing: "Shlomo sat on the throne of David his father, and his kingship was firmly established."[27]

These customs accord with Rashi's view that, when there is a dispute, the kingship is not inherited and anointing is required at the outset. The anointing **establishes and appoints** the new king. Shlomo, too, was therefore appointed **through** his anointing.

One difficulty remains, however.

The *parshah* describes not only how **Avraham** sent away the sons of the concubines and chose Yitzchak, but also Yitzchak's standing after Avraham's passing: "After Avraham's death, Hashem **blessed Yitzchak**…." {Yitzchak thus received} a new blessing. As Rashi puts it,[28] the Master of blessings — Hashem Himself — came and blessed him.

The *haftarah* should therefore also include the account of how Shlomo's appointment was completed through his anointing and how he actually became[29] king.[30]

3.

A Closer Look

To understand this, we must first examine more closely the significance of Shlomo's anointing.

Commenting on Chanah's prophecy, the *Gemara* states:[31]

24) For the various customs, see *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, vol. 10, appendices to the entry *Haftarah*.

25) *Machzor Ashkenaz* with the commentary *Hadras Kodesh*, cited in *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, loc. cit.

26) *Seder HaParshiyos VeHaHaftaros*.

27) *I Melachim* 2:12. Avudraham writes: "Until 'and his kingship was firmly established,' which is in *Melachim*." This is also cited in *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, loc. cit. Note that for the *haftarah* of *Parshas Vayechi*, too, we read "'David's days drew near to die' through 'and his kingship was firmly established,' which is in *Melachim*," as Avudraham states in the source above.

28) Rashi on *Bereishis* 25:11, citing *Bereishis Rabbah* 61:6; see also the sources cited there.

29) Note that there are those who have the custom of skipping ahead and adding *I Melachim* 1:46; see *Encyclopedia Talmudis*, loc. cit.

30) The question is especially pertinent since Shlomo became king during David's lifetime, as noted in footnote 7 above.

31) *Megillah* 14a and the sources cited there.

> *"My horn is exalted in Hashem"*[32] *— my horn is exalted, but not my flask. David and Shlomo, who were anointed with a horn, had enduring kingship; Shaul and Yehu, who were anointed with a flask, did not have enduring kingship.*[33]

This raises a question. Rambam rules:[34]

> *Once David was anointed, he acquired the crown of kingship, and the kingship belongs to him and his male descendants forever, as it is stated:*[35] *"Your throne will be established forever."*

Shlomo's kingship was thus a continuation of David's — {an expression of David's} "enduring kingship." Why, then, does the *Gemara* say, "David **and Shlomo**, who were anointed with a horn, had enduring **kingship**," as though each had a separate kingship, with Shlomo's anointing also marking the beginning of a **new** kingship?[36] This would parallel Shaul and Yehu, each of whom began a **new** kingship rather than succeeding his father as king.

Yet Shlomo's kingship had already been secured when David was anointed and "acquired the crown of kingship… forever." Shlomo's own anointing served only "to **resolve** the dispute[37] and to make known to everyone that he alone is king."

Another point requires clarification. Rambam cites the law that "a king whose father was a king is not anointed" in both *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* and *Hilchos Melachim*.[38] In

32) *I Shmuel* 2:1.

33) This is the wording in *Megillah*, loc. cit., as well as in *Horayos* and *Kerisus*, cited there. The *Tosefta*, end of ch. 4 of *Sanhedrin*, states: "Shaul and Yehu… because **their kingship was destined to be broken**; David and Shlomo… because their kingship is **an everlasting kingship**." The *Talmud Yerushalmi, Shekalim* 6:1, states: "Shaul… their kingship was **a passing kingship**… David and Shlomo were anointed with a horn; their kingship was **an enduring kingship**." Both sources {differ from the *Gemara* in two respects}: 1) This teaching is not presented as an interpretation of Chanah's prophecy, but follows the law, "Kings are anointed only with a horn; Shaul…." 2) Shaul and Yehu are mentioned before David and Shlomo. This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

34) *Hilchos Melachim* 1:7.

35) *II Shmuel* 7:16.

36) Clearly, "their kingship endured" cannot mean merely that **their own** kingship did not cease **during their lifetimes**, in contrast to Shaul, concerning whom it was said, "Hashem has torn the kingship of Israel from you" (*I Shmuel* 15:28). Shaul remained king throughout his life, as is evident from the straightforward reading of *I Shmuel*, ch. 16ff. Yehu's kingship likewise continued, to the extent that {he was promised,} "Descendants of yours to the fourth generation will sit on the throne of Israel" (*II Melachim* 10:30). Note also *I Melachim* 11:11ff.

37) It should be noted that the anointing does not serve to resolve the dispute in practice. It takes place only after "they have agreed upon one of them, or the majority have followed him, or the Sanhedrin, a prophet, or the *Kohen Gadol* has appointed him. Once one individual has come to hold the kingship, by whatever means, he is anointed with the anointing oil" (Rambam's Commentary on the Mishnah, *Kerisus*, loc. cit.).

38) See the references in footnote 18.

Hilchos Klei HaMikdash, he uses the wording quoted above: "To resolve the dispute and to make known to everyone that he alone is king,[39] as Shlomo was anointed because of the dispute raised by Adoniyahu, Yoash because of Asalyah, and Yehoachaz because of his brother Yehoyakim."

In *Hilchos Melachim*, however, Rambam writes only "to resolve the dispute." He does **not** add "and to make known to everyone that he alone is king…."

At first glance, this could be explained by Rambam's practice of relying on what he has already written.[40] Since *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* precedes *Hilchos Melachim*, he need not repeat the explanation in *Hilchos Melachim*.

Yet a difficulty remains: The primary place for a detailed discussion of the laws of kings, including their anointing, is ***Hilchos Melachim***. The **laws** of a king's anointing appear in *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* only as an **extension** of its discussion of the anointing oil.

It would therefore seem that the **reason** for this law — particularly the additional reason, "to make known to everyone that he alone is king" — belongs specifically in ***Hilchos Melachim***.

4.

Davidic Kings and Other Kings

The crux of the explanation is as follows: {Anointing in order} "to make known to everyone that he alone is king" pertains primarily to the kings of the house of David, as will be explained below.

In *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash*, the details of a king's anointing are discussed as part of the laws of the anointing oil. Anointing with this oil is reserved for "the kings of the house of David alone."[41] Thus, it is **here** that Rambam states that anointing a king whose father was a king also serves "to make known to everyone that he alone is king."

Hilchos Melachim, by contrast, addresses the laws of kings *in general*. Rambam {not only} discusses how "once David was anointed, he acquired the crown of kingship, and the kingship belongs to him and his… descendants," {but} also rules:[42]

---

39) Rambam's Commentary on the Mishnah, *Kerisus*, loc. cit., similarly states: "To put an end to the quarrel and remove the dispute among the populace, so that they will know that he is Hashem's anointed and will fear him." The wording is similar in the Kapach translation.

40) See *Yad Malachi*, *Klalei HaRambam*, sec. 6.

41) *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* 1:7.

42) *Hilchos Melachim* 1:8.

> *If a prophet appoints a king from another tribe of Israel, and that king follows the path of Torah and mitzvos and fights the wars of Hashem, he is a king, and* ***all the laws of kingship apply to him****.… For Achiyah HaShiloni appointed Yeravam and told him: "If you diligently heed*[43] *all that I command you… I will build you an enduring house, as I built for* ***David****.…"*[44]

[Rambam adds only that "the kings of Israel [from other tribes] are not anointed with the anointing oil, but with balsam oil."][45]

Consequently, when Rambam states there that "a king whose father was a king is not anointed unless there is a dispute or war, in which case he is anointed," he gives only the reason "to resolve the dispute." This reason applies to the kings of Israel as well, as will be explained below.

5.

The Crown of Kingship

The explanation is as follows:[46]

As noted above, Rambam holds that even after David acquired the crown of kingship, "if a prophet appoints a king from another tribe of Israel… he is a king." Nevertheless, there is a fundamental distinction between them. As Rambam continues:[47] "The kings of the house of David will endure forever, as it is stated, 'Your throne will be established forever.' But if a king arises from the rest of Israel, the kingship will [eventually] cease from his household." Even **while** a king from another tribe of Israel is reigning, "the primary kingship belongs to David."[48]

Rambam goes so far as to write in *Sefer HaMitzvos*:[49]

> *As for kingship alone, you already know from the wording of the books of the Prophets that David acquired it. [Our Sages] explicitly stated: "David acquired the crown of kingship," as did his descendants after him, for all generations. For anyone who believes in the Torah of Moshe Rabbeinu, there can be no king other than a descendant of David, specifically through Shlomo.*[50] *Anyone outside this*

43) {Rambam cites the verse in this form, but} the verse itself reads "If you heed…," without the additional word *shamoa* {rendered here as "diligently"}.

44) *I Melachim* 11:38.

45) *Hilchos Melachim* 1:10. See also *Kesef Mishneh*, ad loc.

46) See the extended discussions in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 28, p. 109ff.; vol. 30, p. 99ff.

47) *Hilchos Melachim* 1:9.

48) Ibid., 1:8.

49) Negative commandment 362.

50) The standard edition of *Sefer HaMitzvos* reads: "For anyone who believes in the Torah of Moshe,

> *distinguished lineage is considered a "foreigner" (nachri) with regard to kingship, just as anyone outside Aharon's lineage is considered a "stranger" (zar) with regard to the service [in the Beis HaMikdash].*[51]

The distinction between the kingship of the house of David and that of other kings of Israel is thus not merely a matter of duration — that the kings of the house of David endure forever, whereas the other kings do not. It is a distinction in the very nature of their kingship.

David **acquired** the crown of kingship. Kingship in its essential sense belongs exclusively to David and his descendants, for all time. It is only "at Hashem's command"[52] that an individual from another tribe of Israel may become king.[53] His kingship, however, is not "the primary kingship." Indeed, relative to David's kingship, he is considered a "foreigner."[54]

As the *Mechilta* states:[55] "Once David was chosen, all [the rest] of Israel were excluded [from kingship]."[56]

6.

Anointing and Eternal Kingship

We may suggest that this explains why only the kings of the house of David are anointed with the anointing oil.

The straightforward wording of Rambam's statement — "Once David was anointed, he acquired the crown of kingship, and the kingship belongs to him and his male descendants forever…" — indicates that David's anointing was not merely another aspect

---

master of all the prophets, there can be no king other than a descendant of Shlomo alone."

51) The passage is quoted from the Kapach translation. The Heller translation uses similar wording.

52) *Radbaz* on *Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim* 1:8. See also *Radbaz* ad loc., 3:8.

53) Note Rambam's precise wording: "If a prophet appoints a king… he is a king…." He does not write, "A king from another tribe of Israel whom a prophet appointed," or a similar formulation. See also *Meiri* on *Horayos* 11b, end of s.v. *Meshichah zo*: "On account of some need, or as a punishment for the tribe of Yehudah."

54) In his commentary on Rav Saadiah Gaon's *Sefer HaMitzvos*, vol. 3, *Minyan HaParshiyos*, sec. 7, Rabbi Yerucham Fishel Perla writes that Rambam retracted in his great work {*Mishneh Torah*} what he had written in *Sefer HaMitzvos*. This conclusion, however, is somewhat difficult to accept.

55) Beginning of *Parshas Bo*.

56) See also *Sefer HaChinuch*, conclusion of *mitzvah* 493: "Once King David was anointed, this *mitzvah* no longer applied to Israel, for they were no longer to appoint another king. David and his descendants are their rulers until Shiloh [Moshiach] comes, who will be his descendant and reign forever, speedily in our days."

of his appointment as king. It established the permanence and eternity of his kingship,[57] "forever."

The reason may be understood as follows: The anointing oil is the oil made by Moshe, {concerning which it is stated,} "This shall be for Me **throughout your generations**,"[58] and "it remains intact for the time to come."[59]

As Rambam writes in *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash*, Moshe "placed it in a vessel for future generations,"[60] and "no other [anointing] oil has ever been made apart from the oil Moshe made."[61]

Anointing with this oil therefore also imparts the quality of "throughout your generations" — permanence and eternity — to the kingship,[62] so that "the kings of the house of David will endure forever."

It is in this context that Rambam states, "A king whose father was a king is not anointed, for kingship is the king's inheritance for all time…. If there is a dispute, he is anointed to resolve the dispute and to make known to everyone that he alone is king."

When there is **no** dispute, a king whose father was a king does not require anointing, because "the anointing of their father also takes effect in them, and they are like their father."[63]

When "there is a dispute," however, the permanence and eternity conferred by anointing {the father} with the anointing oil are not openly manifest or recognized in the son. The son is therefore anointed for **two** purposes:

1) "To resolve the dispute." This applies not only to the kings of the house of David, who are anointed with the anointing oil, but also to a king from another tribe of Israel, who is anointed with balsam oil.

2) "**To make known** to everyone that he **alone** is king." This is a quality **unique** to the kings of the house of David.

57) See *Kiryas Sefer* on *Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim*, ad loc.: "Through this anointing, he acquired it for himself and his descendants forever…." This statement, however, follows Rambam's words at the **beginning** of the *halachah*.

58) *Shemos* 30:31.

59) *Horayos* and *Kerisus*, loc. cit.

60) *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* 1:2, end.

61) Ibid., 1:5, end. Rambam's Commentary on the Mishnah, *Kerisus*, loc. cit., uses similar wording. See also *Ibn Ezra* on *Shemos* 30:33.

62) This also helps us appreciate the flow of Rambam's discussion in his Commentary on the Mishnah, *Kerisus*, loc. cit.

63) *Tzafnas Pane'ach*, cited in footnote 19.

This also explains Rambam's precise wording, "to make known to everyone that he **alone** is king." What does the word "alone" add?[64]

Rambam does not mean merely that **he** is king, rather than the rival who challenged him. He means that "he **alone** is king" at all times. This is true not only as it was in the days of David and Shlomo, but even when a king from another tribe of Israel is reigning. The Davidic king is still "king **alone**" — for the "crown of kingship" was acquired exclusively by David and his descendants,[65] forever.

Rambam therefore includes this explanation in *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash*. It is a detail in the laws of **the anointing oil**, rather than in the laws of a king — who may also be a king without being "king alone." The anointing oil serves to reveal that a king whose father was a king, and whose succession was disputed, likewise possesses the quality of "king alone" unique to the kings of the house of David. He, too, shares in their eternity[66] — they "endure forever."[67]

7.

Shlomo and David's Eternal Kingship

We can now explain why the *Gemara* explicitly names {both kings} — "David and Shlomo, who were anointed with a horn, had enduring kingship" — even though Shlomo was a king whose father was a king, and was anointed only "to resolve the dispute," as explained above.

Although "once David was anointed, he acquired the crown of kingship," this essential quality of kingship continued specifically through Shlomo. Indeed, as Rambam writes in *Sefer HaMitzvos*, quoted above, "For anyone who believes in the Torah of Moshe {Rabbeinu}, there can be **no king** other than a descendant of David, **specifically through Shlomo**."

---

64) Note Meiri on *Shekalim*, ad loc.: "Nevertheless, where there is a dispute… he is anointed to publicize to everyone that he is the king." He adds nothing further.

65) Kings from the other tribes of Israel are considered "foreigners" {with regard to kingship}, as explained in sec. 5 above.

66) This also helps us understand why Rambam begins the *halachah* in *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* by stating, "A king is anointed only at a spring." This is so that his kingship will endure (*Horayos* 12a; *Kesef Mishneh* on *Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim* 1:11).

67) There are further differences between Rambam's wording in *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash* and *Hilchos Melachim*: (1) In *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash*, he writes, "If there is a dispute"; in *Hilchos Melachim*, "a dispute or war." (2) In *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash*, he writes, "**As** Shlomo was anointed"; in *Hilchos Melachim*, "**Therefore** they anointed…." (3) In *Hilchos Klei HaMikdash*, he writes, "because of **the dispute raised by** Adoniyahu"; in *Hilchos Melachim*, "because of Adoniyahu." See *Chiddushei Aggados Maharsha* on *Horayos*, ad loc. See also *Shaarei Yosef* (by Chida) on *Horayos*, ad loc. This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

Rambam also includes this point[68] in the twelfth of the Thirteen Principles of Faith: "Included in this principle (concerning the Era of Moshiach)… is that there can be **no king of Israel** other than one from the house of David, specifically **from Shlomo's descendants**."

Shlomo's kingship and anointing were thus not merely a continuation[69] of David's kingship on account of his happening to be the one who inherited it. Rather, the defining quality of Davidic kingship — a kingship that lasts **"forever"** — continued after David specifically through Shlomo's kingship.

This is why Shlomo's kingship was distinct from that of all the other kings of the house of David. He was "king alone" practically and openly, **just like** David his father. The other kings of the house of David, by contrast, were not the sole kings over all Israel, since a king from another tribe of Israel was appointed, at a prophet's direction, to rule over the Ten Tribes.

The reason is that David had received an explicit prophecy from the outset concerning the eternity of Shlomo's kingship:[70] "A son will be born to you; he will be a man of rest… Shlomo will be his name…. He will build a House for My name… **and I will establish the throne of his kingship over Israel forever**."

Moreover, just as Scripture speaks of Hashem's specific choice of David — "He chose David His servant"[71] — through which "all [the rest] of Israel were excluded" from kingship, as stated in the *Mechilta* above, it likewise speaks of His choice of Shlomo:[72]

> *Hashem… **chose** me from all my father's household to be king over Israel forever…. He desired to make me king over all Israel. And of all my sons — for Hashem has given me many sons — **He chose Shlomo my son** to sit on the throne of Hashem's kingship over Israel.*

All of David's other sons were thereby excluded {from carrying on this eternal kingship}.

The *Gemara* therefore includes both kings together: "David and Shlomo, who were anointed with a horn, had enduring kingship." The eternity of David's kingship was promised specifically and exclusively in relation to Shlomo — "I will establish the throne of his kingship over Israel forever." Thus, this exclusive status was also drawn forth through

68) Rambam's Commentary on the Mishnah, *Sanhedrin*, chapter *Chelek*.

69) See *Shaalos U'Teshuvos Avnei Nezer*, loc. cit., secs. 5–6, for an explanation of Shlomo's anointing because of the dispute raised by Adoniyahu.

70) *I Divrei HaYamim* 22:9–10.

71) *Tehillim* 78:70.

72) *I Divrei HaYamim* 28:4–5.

Shlomo's anointing — {as reflected in Rambam's words,} "to make known to everyone that he **alone** is king."

The kingship is therefore associated with both of them — David and Shlomo.

8.

An Enduring Choice

In light of all the above, we can now understand how the *haftarah* "**relate[s] to the subject** of the *parshah*" and carries its theme forward.

The kings of the house of David "will endure forever." This is expressed in the concluding words of the *haftarah*: After David swore, "So will I do this very day" — that Shlomo would be king — Bas Sheva declared, "May my lord, **King David**, live **forever**."

Indeed, "the kingship will **never** cease from David's descendants,"[73] even if, G-d forbid, they do not conduct themselves as they should. {In Rambam's words:} "Hashem promised him this, as it is stated:[74] 'If his sons abandon My Torah and do not follow My laws… I will punish their transgression with a rod and their iniquity with afflictions, **but I will not withdraw My kindness from him**.'"

Since David's crown of kingship is founded on Hashem's choice, it cannot truly be interrupted or altered.

This parallels the Jewish people's unique standing as descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. This distinction, transmitted by the Patriarchs to their descendants — to every member of the Jewish people — endures for all generations,[75] because Hashem's choice, "You chose Avram,"[76] is not subject to change.

With regard to the house of David, the declaration "May my lord, **King David**, live **forever**" was realized through the continuation of David's kingship: "Shlomo your son will reign after me." As explained above, {Shlomo's succession reflects Hashem's choice:} "He chose Shlomo my son to sit on the throne of Hashem's kingship over Israel."

Similarly, in our *parshah*, Hashem's choice of Avraham continues through {Yitzchak}, fulfilling His promise, "For it is in Yitzchak that offspring will be considered yours."[77] Yitzchak is {thus} the one who carries on the house of Avraham.

---

73) *Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim* 1:7.

74) *Tehillim* 89:31, 33–34.

75) In the words of the *Tanya* (ch. 18): "The Patriarchs are the Divine chariot. They therefore merited to draw down *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neshamah* to their descendants after them, **forever**, from the ten holy *Sefiros*…."

76) *Nechemiah* 9:7.

77) *Bereishis* 21:12.

We may suggest that this explains why, according to Rambam's version of the *haftarah* — which is also the custom followed by most Jews today — we do not read the verse describing Shlomo's actual kingship.

In our *parshah*, too, the role of the Patriarchs — Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov — as the foundation of the entire Jewish people, transmitting their legacy to their descendants forever,[78] has not yet been completed. {This is reflected in the *Gemara*'s interpretation[79] of the verse,} "For it is in Yitzchak that offspring will be considered yours." {The *Gemara* understands the words "in Yitzchak" to mean that some of his descendants are counted as Avraham's offspring,} "but not all of Yitzchak's descendants." The foundation laid by the Patriarchs is completed only with Yaakov's birth, in *Parshas Toldos*: "Only three are called Patriarchs."[80]

9.

The Full Expression of Hashem's Choice

We may further suggest that the *haftarah's* connection to the *parshah* goes beyond the parallel between Davidic kingship — David and Shlomo — and the Patriarchs. Through these kings, Hashem's choice of Avraham and Yitzchak as the **foundation** of the Jewish people finds its full expression.

The explanation is as follows:

A nation reaches its full realization only when its members come together as **one** people, rather than remaining separate individuals.

This unity is brought about by the king. As Rambam writes concerning the *mitzvah* of appointing a king:[81] "We are commanded to appoint a king over ourselves who will **bring** our entire nation **together and lead us**."[82]

Hashem's choice of the Jewish people as one nation is therefore expressed in His choice of a king over Israel **forever** — His choice of David and Shlomo. These are "the kings of the house of David… who will endure forever," through whom "Hashem's kingship over Israel" is expressed.

78) *Tanya*, ch. 18.

79) *Nedarim* 31a. See also Rashi on *Bereishis* 28:15; *Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim* 10:7.

80) *Berachos* 16b.

81) *Sefer HaMitzvos*, positive commandment 173.

82) The Kapach translation reads: "Who will unite our speech and lead us all." The notes to the Heller translation record an alternative version: "Who will establish our faith and lead us all."

There is a further point. As discussed on several occasions, Davidic kingship is connected with the *Beis HaMikdash*, as the verse states:[83] "I did not choose a **city** from all the tribes of Israel in which to build a House for My name to be there, but I chose **David** to be over My people Israel."[84]

The *Beis HaBechirah* {the Chosen House} was therefore built specifically through David, who made all the preparations for its construction,[85] and Shlomo, who {actually built it} — "He will build a House for My name."

Through the choice of the kings of the house of David and the building of the *Beis HaMikdash*, the Jewish people attained "rest and inheritance."[86] The Divine Presence, too, found rest and inheritance — a {permanent} dwelling {in the *Beis HaMikdash*}: "This is the House of Hashem, G-d…,"[87] and "This is My resting place forever."[88]

Hashem's choice of Avraham and the Patriarchs who followed him as the fathers of the Jewish people thus became manifest with the fulfillment of "May my lord, King David, live forever" — through the kingship of David and Shlomo. Through them, the *Beis HaBechirah* was built, establishing a permanent dwelling for the Divine Presence **among the Jewish people**.

From sichos delivered on Shabbos Parshas Vayeira and Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah, 5743 (1982)

83) *I Melachim* 8:16. The *Zohar*, vol. 2, p. 198a, raises a question concerning this verse. See the explanation in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 36, p. 199ff.

84) This may explain why the kings of the house of David are appointed **in Yerushalayim**, whereas "they [the other kings of Israel] are never appointed in Yerushalayim" (*Rambam*, *Hilchos Melachim* 1:10).

85) *I Divrei HaYamim*, chs. 28–29.

86) *Devarim* 12:9. See Rashi, ad loc., citing *Megillah* 10a and *Zevachim* 119a.

87) *I Divrei HaYamim* 22:1. See also *II Shmuel* 7:2.

88) *Tehillim* 132:14. See *Rambam*, *Hilchos Beis HaBechirah* 1:3. See also the extended discussions in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 16, p. 466ff.; vol. 24, p. 79ff.