

## Rabbi's Article II

*Weakness?!*

The letter *hai* (הי) has two formats in the Scriptures. There is the one with the dot in it (הֵי), which makes it, "emphatic" (articulated strongly), and there is the one without the dot in it, which makes it "weak" (silent), and there are grammatical rules as to when each should be used. With this, let us see the last verse in *parshat Matot*: "Nobah went and conquered Kenath and its surrounding villages, and called it Nobah ויקרא לה נבה," upon which Rashi (-[Link](#)) comments: "[The letter 'hai' in] הֵי is not a 'mappik' [aspirate 'hai' since there is no dot in the] ה [thus indicating that it is silent, contrary to the general rule]. I saw in the commentary of Rabbi Moshe HaDarshan (-[Link](#)): Since this name did not remain permanently, it is [a] silent [letter], so that it [the word] הֵי can be expounded as, הֵי 'not.' But I wonder how he would expound two words similar to this, namely (-Ruth 2:14), 'Boaz said to her (הֵי)'; (-Zachariah 5:11) 'To build itself (הֵי) a house.'"

Questions: (i) Rashi's commentary is (-Rashi, Genesis 3:8), "but I have come only [to teach] the simple meaning of the Scripture." Hence, if Rashi feels that Rabbi Moshe Hadarshan's comment is not the *simple meaning*, then why did Rashi quote him? (ii) Why is Rashi 'wondering' how to explain the *Soft* (letter) *Hai* verses in Ruth and Zachariah, when the sages (-Ruth Rabba 5:5; Sanhedrin 24a; Kedushin 49b) do explain these two verses as well?!

When Rashi (-ibid) explains his commentary as being only the, "simple meaning of the Scripture," Rashi goes on to say, "and such exegesis that clarifies the words of the verses, each word in its proper way." Hence, Rashi's quoting Rabbi Moshe HaDarshan's commentary means that while it is an exegesis, nevertheless, it also has its place in the, "simple meaning of the Scripture." Hence, Rashi here is not asking a question of, "and it is difficult to me," but rather, just an, "I wonder," in which Rashi is wondering whether Rabbi Moshe HaDarshan's comments on the other two verses would be apropos to the, "simple meaning of the Scripture," as well, or as those of the sages, which are not apropos to the, "simple meaning of the Scripture."

This is the meaning of Rashi's carefully chosen words, "so that it [the word] הֵי can be expounded as ('weak'; silent), הֵי 'not,'" in which Rashi is telling us, that even though it is an "expounding," however, it fits in the, "simple meaning of the Scripture," since (i) he did call it (הֵי), however, the name didn't (הֵי) remain. However, this expounded cannot apply to neither the verses of Ruth or Zachariah as, "simple meaning of the Scripture."

Ruth: The verses tell us how Boaz told Ruth to come only to his field to collect grain, and to be with the handmaids, to which Ruth responds (-2:13), "but I am not [as worthy] as one of your handmaids," to which Boaz is now responding (-2:13), "And Boaz said to her (at mealtime, 'Come here and partake of the bread, and dip your morsel in the vinegar')." Here the, "simple meaning of the Scripture," cannot mean that there is an "expounding," "as, הֵי 'not,'" for the 'not' that our sages apply here is that Boaz told Ruth that she is not as a handmaiden, but as our matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, which is not at all the, "simple meaning of the Scripture"!

Zachariah: The verses are speaking of a prophesy in which Zachariah saw an *eipha* measurement (432 eggs; -[Link](#)) of talent of lead was traveling, "To build itself (הֵי) a house in the land of Shinar (Babylon)." The Talmud upon this verse explains that the *eipha* measurement of a talent of lead, upon which he saw, "two women were coming forth with wind in their wings," represents the punishment for the two wickedness of (i) *ego* and (ii) *false flattery*, which existed in Babylon. However, the Talmud states that it *ego* didn't settle in Babylon, for, "9/10's of *ego* were taken by *Eilam* (and not Babylon). Hence, only one of them (flattery) went to build a house (permanency) in Babylon, while the other went on and grew in *Eilam*. Hence, the word, "itself (הֵי)," which is singular, refers to 'flattery,' which stayed permanently, and hence, cannot be "expounding," "as, הֵי 'not,'" meaning that it let Babylon. Hence, Rashi wonders if Rabbi Moshe HaDarshan will have a, "simple meaning of the Scripture," exegesis for these two verses.

The "Wine of Torah (esoteric meaning)" of Rashi's comment: All three verses speak of the *Other Side* (impurity). Our verse -an Emorite city, Ruth's verse -a Moabite women, and Zachariah's verse -the falseness of *ego* and flattery. Therefore, the verses are teaching us that the *Other Side* is 'weak', and has no permanency.

However, Rashi is *wondering*, true that in our verse, the Emorite city was but subdued, and not transformed into holiness, and hence, remains 'weak'. However, Ruth the Moabite converts to Judaism, and transcends to the greatest heights as that of our matriarchs, so why is the verse referring to Ruth as 'weak'?!

So too, with Zachariah's verse. The esoteric meaning of the "falsehood" of Babylon refers to the methodology of the *Babylonian Talmud* (-[Link](#)), in which the discussions descend into the *darkness* of false claims, and through the process of elimination, carves out, and brings forth, the truth, the true verdict of the Torah. And it is only through this process of descending into the *falsehood*, and applying the process of elimination and clarification, that the *Babylonian Talmud* succeeded, "To build itself a house in the land of Shinar (Babylon)," a trustworthy, permanent and eternal house, as the sages (-Sanhedrin 24a) define the verse (-Lamentations 3:6), "He has made me dwell in dark places..." "Says Rabbi Yirmiya, 'This is the Talmud of Babylonia.'" Hence Rashi is stating his wonder at how the transformation of the *Other Side* (falseness of Babylon) into holiness can be referred to as, הֵי (without a dot, weak, and silent) can be expounded as, הֵי 'not'?!