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Review 1 בקיאות

Part 1 פרק ל"ז

1. What are the two explanations that רש"י provides for the juxtaposition of the end of וישלח and the beginning of וישב?

a. We finished of וישלח with the lineage of עשו. This lineage was mentioned quickly. In the beginning of וישב we start the discussion of the lineage and offspring of יעקב. It is very long (takes up the rest of בראשית). This is to teach us that ה' mentions his cherished ones (יעקב) for a while and for the one who despised (עשו) he mentions very little.

b. יעקב saw all of the lineage of עשו which was just mentioned and said, "Who can conquer all of them?" Now, the תורה says, "These are the offspring of יעקב: יוסף." This shows that יוסף will be the solution to the problem and destroy עשו and his lineage.

2. יעקב תולדות of יוסף is listed as the only יוסף. One explanation is פשט. The others are found in a מדרש. What are they?

a. It doesn't mean "these are the offspring of יעקב." It means "these are of the offspring of יעקב." The story of יוסף is coming up now so that is why it only says יוסף.

b. There are many parallels between יעקב and יוסף. יעקב's sole purpose in working for לבן was to marry רחל, יוסף's mother. Therefore, יוסף was the cause of all of יעקב's offspring.

c. Furthermore, everything that happened to יעקב happened to יוסף. Both were hated by their brothers. Both of their brothers want to kill them

d.

3. רש"י cited a מדרש that explains the significance of the word וישב. What is it?

יעקב wanted to settle (וישב) בשלווה – in tranquility. But comes along יוסף and this whole ordeal and now there is no tranquility. This is because ה' does not let the righteous settle in tranquility. They will have it in עולם הבא.

4. What were the "evil reports" that יוסף told his father and how was he punished for each report?

a. יוסף told his father that his brother tore a limb from a living animal and ate it (אבר מן החי). For this יוסף was punished by the goat being slaughtered and the blood of it used to trick יעקב into thinking that he was dead.

- b. He said that they would mock the sons of the secondary wives by calling them servants. For this, יוסף was punished by being sold into servitude.
- c. He said that they were suspect of sexual immorality. For this, Potifar's wife wanted יוסף and eventually caused יוסף to be put in jail.

5. Why does the תורה stress that יוסף was a "נער" (a youth)?

He would do things associated with youth like play with his hair and groom his eyes so he would look attractive.

6. Give three explanations of "בן זקנים".

- a. יוסף was born at the time of יעקב's old age.
- b. זקן here means תורה scholar. All that יעקב learned was given over to יוסף.
- c. זקנים is a contraction of the Aramaic words זיו איקונין which means that he had the splendor of יעקב, his father.

7. What is strange about the phrase מעמק חברון (from the valley of Hebron). How does the מדרש explain it?

It's strange because חברון is on a mountain, not in a valley. The מדרש explains that עמק here doesn't mean valley, but rather it means deep council. יוסף consulted with אברהם who was buried there. What was discussed was the fulfillment of the ברית which states that אברהם's offspring will live in a foreign land. יוסף is about to start the process by being sold by the brothers.

8. What is significant of the fact that יוסף arrived at שכם?

שכם was a bad place. The brothers sold יוסף there, Dina was raped there and the kingdom was divided there (ישראל and יהודה).

Review 2 בקיאות

Part 2 פרק ל"ז

1. Where did the brother journey from? And where did they journey to? Two explanations.

- a. They journey from brotherhood
- b. They went to Dothan – meaning that they were trying to find legal pretext to kill יוסף.

2. Who said, "ונראה מה יהיה חלמותיו" (See what will be of his dreams)? Prove your answer.

ה' said this. The brothers are saying, "Let us kill him!" ה' said "See what will be of his dreams" as if to say "We shall see whose words will become true, Mine or yours." It could not have been

the brothers who said this because they were going to kill him and therefore the dreams would be nullified.

3. Why did ראובן plan to save יוסף?

He thought to himself that because he was the בכור, he would be blamed by יעקב if anything happened to יוסף.

4. What is problematic with the expression והבור רק אין בו מים (The pit was empty, there was no water in it)?

If it's empty, why does the תורה need to tell me there's no water in it? This is to say that there was no water in it but there were scorpions and snakes in it (it wasn't empty except for the fact that it had no water).

5. Why does the תורה tell us what merchandise the caravan was carrying?

Usually, the Arab caravans carried malodorous (bad smelling, Latin roots!) stuff like petroleum and resin. Here, the caravan is carrying nice smelling spices as a reward to יוסף who was righteous.

6. What is the meaning of יהודה's words, מה בצע (what gain)?

He was not asking, "What gain is there in killing יוסף," but rather he was asking, "what financial gain can we make off the death of יוסף?"

7. How do we know that יוסף was sold many times?

Because it mentions a different caravan, the Midianites, implying that יוסף was sold many times.

8. Why was ראובן not present at the time of the sale of יוסף (two explanations)?

- a. It was his day to serve יעקב so he couldn't be at the sale.
- b. He was busy fasting and wearing sackcloth for moving his father's bed.

9. Why didn't ה' reveal to יעקב that יוסף was alive? Why didn't יצחק tell him?

Because the brothers made a curse to the person who reveals to יעקב what happened to יוסף. ה' was a partner in this curse so he didn't tell יעקב. יצחק said, "How can I reveal it to יעקב if not even ה' will reveal it?"

10. How many years did יעקב mourn יוסף. Prove it. Why this particular number of years?

22 years: יוסף was 17 when he was sold, 30 when he stood before פרעה and add the 7 years of plenty and two years of famine. It was 22 years because for 22 years יעקב did not fulfill his commandment of honors his parents (20 years with לבן and 2 years on the road).

11. Who are the daughters who attempted to console יעקב (two explanations)?

- a. יעקב's own daughters (twins were born to every tribe).
- b. His daughters-in-law.

12. Why was יעקב inconsolable?

When someone dies, a heavenly decree is made that the dead person be forgotten from the hearts of those who survive. But, since יוסף is not dead, there is no decree and יעקב cannot be comforted.

13. Explain the words אבל שאלה – to the grave mourning (two explanations).

- a. יעקב is saying that he will be buried in his mourning.
- b. יעקב was promised that if doesn't see any of his sons die, he will not go to גהנום. He thinks he lost a son so he will go to גהנום.

14. Who does the crying in the phrase ויבך אתו אביו?

יצחק, but he wouldn't mourn because he knew יוסף was alive.

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