

Cheshbonot – Vayeira

השעור מקדש לרפואת שמעונה בת שרה

[Shiurim Main Menu](#)

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִרָהֶם אֶל-לָקִים יְרָאָה לּוֹ הַשָּׁה לְעֹלָה בְּנִי וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו (בראשית כב, ח).

The Torah is unlike any other book. The Torah is written by HKB"H. Since it is a Divine text, like its Creator, it is *infinite*. It is not limited to the 79,976 words or the 304,805 letters which appear within it. There are infinite, additional layers of encoding, beyond the actual words and letters themselves, based on the numeric values of the words and letters, the ordering of the words and letters, abbreviations, letter reversals, letter substitutions, vowels, ta'amei hamikrah, etc. etc.

The discipline of deciphering the hidden codes in the Torah is called תורת הקרמז and is one of *four* primary disciplines used to understand the Torah, abbreviated as פִּרְשֵׁי, i.e. פֶּשֶׁט, רִמְזִי, דְּרָשׁ, סוּד. Many Mefarshim, such as the Ba'al HaTurim, use תורת הקרמז as the basis of their perush on the Torah.

and with enormous Siyata di'Shmaya, when I was writing the second edition of sefer Meir Panim in תשפ"ב, HKB"H sent Eliyahu HaNavi to open my eyes to an incredible רִמְזִי regarding the Akeida which appears at the end of this week's parsha. Yitzchak asks Avraham a poignant question הֲנִיָּה ... "Here is the flintstone to light the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Avraham answers (in our passuk above) אֶל-לָקִים יְרָאָה לּוֹ הַשָּׁה לְעֹלָה בְּנִי. The pshat of that passuk is "HKB"H will "see" (choose) for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son!" There are well known perushim on this passuk, e.g. Rashi (quoting בראשית רבה (נו, ד "HKB"H will choose for Himself the lamb, and if there is no lamb, you, my son בְּנִי, will be the burnt offering".

אֶל-לָקִים יְרָאָה לּוֹ, if you take the rashei teivot of אֵל-לֹ (מאיר פנים, פרק טו, עמי קלח) אֵל, it makes the word אֵל, which in fact is how things turned out - וַיֵּשָׂא אֲבִרָהֶם אֶת עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה אֵל אַחֵר נֹאֲחֵז בְּסֻבָּד בְּקֶרְנָיו - וַיֵּלֶךְ אֲבִרָהֶם וַיִּקַּח אֶת הָאֵל וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ לְעֹלָה תַּחַת בָּנוּ (שם יג).

I was overjoyed at discovering this רִמְזִי and even *more* ecstatic to later find that I was *not* the first to notice it. The ראש (חיד"א, R' Chaim Yosef David Azulai (דוד, פרשת וירא, בקטע "ומעתה נבא לביאור הכתוב"

In fact, it is unlikely that any רמזים that I have ever found are originals, as Shlomo HaMelech says וְאֵין כָּל חֶדֶשׁ תַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם (קהלת א, ט) and I am always over the moon whenever I find a prior source for them.

From this we see that encoded into the Torah, is the outcome of the Akeida *before the end of the story*. This is one infinitesimal example of how everything that has *ever been* and everything that *will be* in the future, is encoded into the Torah. You just need to know where and how to look and obviously ... you need enormous Siyata di'Shmaya to be able to recognize it amongst all the clutter. I had read that passuk thousands of times before and never noticed it.

The question I would like to address in this shiur is "Why did Avraham Avinu not notice that same rashei teivot רמז, that *he himself uttered?* "

We are talking about Avraham Avinu, author of *Sefer HaYetzira*, the most seminal book in history ever written on Kabbalah which, amongst other things, is an *encyclopedia* of תורת הרמז, containing not only "thought-provoking" letter/word combinations, but more *importantly*, letter/word combinations which enable you to *create things*, the *hidden secrets* of Lashon HaKodesh that HKB"H Himself used to create the world in the six days of creation. The Gemara (סנהדרין סה, ע"ב) describes how Rava used Sefer HaYetzira to create a man and how R' Chanina and R' Oshiya were dabbling with Sefer HaYetzira on Shabbat eve and created an עגלאתא, a prime quality calf, which they later enjoyed for dinner. Everyone knows the story of the Maharal and the golem of Prague (also created using Sefer HaYetzira).

Surely, a second after spontaneously (and as it turns out – prophetically) uttering that passuk אֶל-לֵקִים יִרְאֶה לּוֹ הַשֶּׁה לְעֹלָה בְּנִי, a light must have gone off in Avraham's head – Eureka! It is going to be an אֵל and *not* my son Yitzchak. Whew! Baruch Hashem!

However, that is not what happened. We know this from how the Midrashim describe the episode.

The yetzer hara appeared to Avraham (בראשית רבה, נו, ד) and asked "Why are you going to kill your son? A son that was miraculously given to you when you were 100-years-old ... you are going to slaughter?" Avraham replies that he is adamant to fulfill HKB"H's commandment. The yetzer hara continues "Everyone is going to say you are a *murderer* and have to stand trial!" Even that did not deter Avraham.

So, the yetzer hara turned his attention (תנחומא וירא, כב) to Yitzchak Avinu "What a מִסְכֵּן you are! Your mother fasted and davened for many years so that you would finally be born and now your father has lost his mind and is going to kill you!" Yitzchak replied, "Nevertheless, I will not contravene the directive of my Creator and the command of my father".

Understanding that words have no effect on the two, the yetzer hara tries to physically stop them by obstructing their way with a large, pulsating river. Avraham enters the river until the swirling water is up to his neck. Avraham beseeches HKB"H "If I or Yitzchak perish, who will spread your word? Who will reveal HKB"H's reality in the world?" HKB"H dried up the river and they managed to continue.

The yetzer hara, trying to prevent Avraham going through with the Akeida, reveals the *true ending* to Avraham (סנהדרין פט, ע"ב) "In the end you are going to sacrifice a *ram*, not Yitzchak!" Still Avraham does not believe him and continues with the preparations for shechita. The Gemara adds "This is the punishment of a liar – even when he tells the *truth* he is not believed!"

As Avraham draws the knife to perform shechita on Yitzchak, the yetzer hara pushes Avraham's hand and he drops the knife (תנחומא וירא, כג). Avraham stretches out his hand to pick up the knife and continue with sacrifice, וַיִּשְׁלַח אַבְרָהָם אֶת יָדוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת הַמִּצְאָקֶלֶת לְשַׁחֵט אֶת בְּנוֹ (שם, י).

Finally, HKB"H sends an angel to tell Avraham to cease and desist. Which angel? According to the Ba'al HaTurim it was Michael, the sofei teivot of וִיקָרָא מִיכָאֵל הָיָה (a classic example of the Ba'al HaTurim's application of תּוֹרַת הַרְמָז to understand the psukim). It makes sense that the angel was not the yetzer hara. Avraham, as we said before, did not believe a word he said.

What do we see from this account in Chazal? The yetzer hara tried *everything* in his arsenal to prevent Avraham from successfully completing his tenth and final nisayon. He *messed with Avraham's mind* to such a degree that Avraham could no longer tell lies from truth. Despite everything, Avraham was unwavering. HKB"H directly told him to sacrifice Yitzchak and that is *exactly* what he was going to do. Only when HKB"H sent the angel Michael to tell him to cease and desist did Avraham in fact back down.

The yetzer hara told Avraham that a ram was going to be sacrificed instead of Yitzchak. Avraham himself, prior to the final act of the Akeida, verbalized a prophecy that *corroborated* what the yetzer hara told him – it came from Avraham's own mouth, not the yetzer hara's, but Avraham missed it. It did not register with him, the author of Sefer HaYetzira, history's leading expert in rashei teivot ... *how could Avraham have missed that?*

Which brings us to the crux of the shiur.

The only reason, with Siyata di'Shmaya, that I noticed that rashei teivot - וְאַל-לֵקִים יִרְאֶה לוֹ, is because ... *I know how the story ends* - the Torah tells us how the story ends in the subsequent psukim. Once you are armed with this

knowledge, it is possible in hindsight, to identify that embedded "code" in the Torah.

However, Avraham did *not yet know* how it would end, he didn't know the passuk **וְהָיָה אֵיל אַחֵר נֶאֱחָז בְּסֻבֹּךְ בְּקֶרְנָיו**. Avraham, all along, was dealing with the terminology of **שֶׁה**, not **אֵיל**. Yitzchak asks him about the **שֶׁה**, the yetzer hara (in the Gemara above) uses the word **שֶׁה** to try stop him. If the yetzer hara would have said **אֵיל**, immediately after Avraham uttered **אֶל-לֵקִים יִרְאֶה לוֹ** a red light would have lit up and he would have noticed. However, **אֵיל** was not even on Avraham's radar at all. Avraham was thinking about a young lamb, a **שֶׁה**, not an *adult male sheep*!

לְמָה הַדָּבָר דוֹמָה? Say HKB"H is giving you a nisayon in your life, for example with parnasa! It is a *really tough* nisayon, like for example in the first few years your bakery business is struggling to make ends meet. You think of throwing in the towel many times and going back to your previous career in computers. The yetzer hara is repeatedly appearing to you in different guises, trying to convince you to give up. But somewhere in your subconscious you instinctively hear HKB"H's voice telling you "Don't give up! Keep treading this path!" You try to search for all kinds of new angles - new breads, new pies, new pricing, new sales points. You try consult with business consultants, marketing experts. You try all kinds of sidelines, like opening a kiosk in your son's yeshiva to supplement the income. Nothing works. The bank manager is still on your case! Year after year after year.

Then one week, out of the blue ... the gabbai comes to you and asks if you could lein the Torah that Shabbat, parshat Truma, since the ba'al koreh who was scheduled to lein that week had some unexpected reason that could not be there. So, although you haven't leined for a *long* while, you hesitatingly accept. You start off reading Kohen ... **וְזֹאת הַתְּרוּמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְחוּ מֵאֹתָם**, not the best leining, but passable. You read about the Aron and the Kaporet, the Kruvim, etc. Then comes Levi. You read about the Shulchan and then you get to the passuk **וְנָתַתָּ עַל הַשֻּׁלְחָן לֶחֶם פָּנִים לְפָנַי תָּמִיד** and suddenly ...

Nothing happens!!!

You continue reading about the Menorah, the covers, the beams, etc. and you breathe a sigh of relief when it is all over, that you managed to not embarrass yourself too much. And a few more years go by, with the bank manager still on your case.

Many years later, a customer comes to pick up his challah order for Shabbat and shows you this new book written by some professor from Bar Ilan about the Five Species of Grain. You begin reading and then, at the end of the book you read a chapter about the Lechem HaPanim and this changes your life and your fortune.

But hang on ... four years prior to that you read the passuk לָחֶם פָּנִים לְפָנַי תִּמְּיֹד, in shul, on the bima! The words came out of *your own mouth* for everyone to hear. Surely that should have registered with you???

And the answer is that they never registered, because they were *nowhere on my radar*. They made as much impression as if I would have said out loud "chocolate/coconut covered marshmallows". At the time, I was focused on Rambam bread, a possible pickup point in Modiin, dropping the bagels price by a shekel. The trigger *was there* but I could not identify it.

Only when I review the episode in *retrospect, in hindsight*, do I now notice that "embedded code" in my life story, but at the time, in *real time*, it was invisible.

This is what a nisayon is. When HKB"H gives us a nisayon, He wants us to successfully accomplish the nisayon, in an *unbiased* fashion!

Imagine if Avraham had *believed* the yetzer hara, or "noticed" his own prophecy and he now *knew* that an מַלְאָךְ was suddenly going to appear in the bush. Despite this, he continued, now "pretending" that he didn't know and that he was still torn and in dire turmoil over sacrificing his son. Would HKB"H have considered that a "fully accomplished nisayon"? Obviously not. Only because Avraham did *not* know and was kept in suspense until the last minute ... did he successfully complete his tenth and final nisayon.

We all go through nisyonot in our lives, both on a private level and on a national level. As I write these words (Wed. morning), the final results of the 26th Israeli national elections are not yet in. Many people are in turmoil over the seemingly unclear results so far. What will be?

In the last three years we have had a glimpse of the impending Geulah. Out of the ashes and grief of October 7, Am Yisrael rose up like lions and pushed back against our enemies who seek to annihilate us. We were teetering on the brink of destruction, choked by a strangle-hold ring of Iran backed proxies who, unbeknownst to us, had been building vast underground *cities* housing an invasion army armed to the teeth. Am Israel shattered their plans. One by one they fell, from Nasrallah in Lebanon, to Sinwar in Gaza, to Ayatollah Khamenei in Iran.

Tiny Israel launched an offensive against Iran, a country almost twelve times our size and population, decapitated the dictator Ayatollah and destroyed much of their missile production infrastructure. Inspired by our courageous strike, the USA joined forces with Israel and together managed to destroy much of Iran's nuclear infrastructure that had been weeks away from producing a nuclear bomb.

The world was in awe ... and in fear of Israel. For the first time since King David, Am Yisrael stood together *as a nation*, steadfast, battling their enemies and emerging triumphant. It was a tangible fulfillment of prophecy in the Bible for all to see. Miracle after miracle after miracle – the release of the hostages from Gaza, the exploding beepers, the decimation of Iran's air defenses, the prevention of a hijacked plane heading for another 9/11 event at Ben Gurion airport, etc. etc. The Iranians launched over 1200 ballistic missiles at Israel in the last two years. By the grace of HKB"H and Israel's advanced defense systems which are a wonder of the world, 86% were intercepted in 2025 and 92% in 2026.

Observing HKB"H's hand in *visibly* helping His Chosen People, sent the entire world into a panic and refuted everything they had deceived themselves into believing in the last 2000 years of history. This resulted in an explosion of antisemitism throughout the world. The enemies of Israel all over the globe see their impending doom and are currently lashing out like a wounded animal in its final death throes.

If you think that the yetzer hara is going to simply ignore the impending Geulah, you are mistaken. The yetzer hara, a "wounded animal", like the other enemies of Israel, has also unleashed its final death throes in a last-ditch effort to prevent the Geulah. Disseminating lies on a global scale, sowing discord within Am Yisrael, brother fighting against brother, inflating egos, creating baseless hatred, distracting us from the reality using petty grievances and personal vendettas. Spreading lies mixed in with truth so you can no longer differentiate between the two.

If you think the yetzer hara messed with Avraham's mind before the Akeida, that was *nothing* compared to the way the yetzer hara is messing with Am Yisrael's mind at this very moment, perhaps the *last time* the yetzer hara will be able to mess with anyone's mind again.

Everything is encoded in the Torah and Tanach, *everything*, including what is going to happen in the world, in Israel, in Panama and in France. Including what is going to happen with you, with your younger brother, your next-door neighbor ... and his cat. But if you try to look for it using תורת הקדמונים to try "predict" what the outcome of something will be, you will fail. Not because it is not there, but because *you will not be able to identify it*. Post factum, if you search for it after the fact, you might find it, because now you are equipped with *knowledge*, looking for something in retrospect, in hindsight. However, right now, we are not privy to what HKB"H has in store.

The Torah is not a horoscope! It is not something that we should use to predict the future. The Torah says (דברים יח, יג) תִּמְנִים תִּהְיֶה עִם ה' אֱ-לֹהֶיךָ (אברהם יח, יג). HKB"H requires only one thing from us – to listen to what He tells us in the Torah. Not to seek out some hidden message secreted away behind some esoteric encoding system, to do cheshbonot and try to figure out HKB"H's plan.

Our job is to innocently *observe the mitzvot* that are clearly written in the Torah and embellished upon by Chazal.

The only legitimate use of studying secret Torah codes is to increase our *sense of wonder* of the Torah. When I was a young lad back in Johannesburg, South Africa, I had a teacher in Yeshiva College high school, HaRav Matityahu Glazerson שליט"א who taught us Tanach. His pet passion was (and remains - he now lives in Israel) uncovering secret codes in the Torah, with a variety of methodologies. He has written numerous books on the subject (you can search for him online). The stuff that he has uncovered is absolutely *incredible*, hints in the Torah to the Holocaust, to 9/11, to COVID, the State of Israel, wars and much more. These were all discovered in retrospect, after the fact. They are tangible evidence and testament that our Torah is something wondrous and Divine, unparalleled by any other text ever in history.

Our sages say that one should not dabble in Torat HaNistar until one has "filled their belly" with Mishna, Gemara, Rishonim and Acharonim. Only then may one approach Torat HaNistar. I have made prodigious use of תורת הקרמז in sefer Meir Panim, but that was only *after* exhausting all other sources in the above-mentioned Mishna, Gemara, Rishonim and Acharonim and was still left with unanswered questions.

My discoveries from use of this methodology have not revealed any new *foundation* principles that are not already mentioned and thoroughly discussed in תורה שבעל פה and תורה שבכתב. What they have done is uncover interesting *connections* between concepts that are seemingly unrelated, for example the Lechem HaPanim and the lunar cycle, the pipes under the Lechem HaPanim on the Shulchan and the Bank of Israel interest rates, and many more connections that affect our every-day lives.

When I am looking for inspiration for a shiur and have exhausted all the known perushim for something in the parshat hashavua, I will run some of the texts in the parsha through some of the methodologies mentioned above to try uncover new *connections* that are not intuitively apparent. (BTW, this is not my own novel technique, I am just following in the formidable footsteps of the Ba'al HaTurim).

For example, the gematria of וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו ה' בְּאֵלֵי מִמְרָא וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב פְּתַח הַיְיָ is the same gematria as וַעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכְנָתִי הָאֵלֹהִים הַיּוֹם. So, what possible connection is there between the angels visiting Avraham in the beginning of the parsha and the Akeida at the end of the parsha? Is there a connection at all?

And the answer is there is definitely a connection. The parsha begins with וַיֵּרָא and ends with וַיִּרְאֶה ה' יְרָאָה. HKB"H appears to Avraham in the beginning of the parsha in his tent, which was equivalent to a Beit Mikdash (Ramban, see shiur on [Noach 2026](#)). At the end of the parsha at the Akeida, HKB"H again appears to

Avraham and he calls the place ה' יְרָאָה, which subsequently became known as ... יְרוּשָׁלַיִם (a combination of what Avraham called it, יְרָאָה, and what Malkitzedek called it יְרוּשָׁלַם), the site of - the future Beit Mikdash. The entire parsha is about HKB"H's Shechina appearing/residing in our world. Even the parsha of Sdom in the middle is connected, because the sin of Sdom distanced HKB"H's Shechina from the fifth level in Heaven מְעוֹן to the sixth level מְכוֹן (בְּרֵאשִׁית רַבָּה) (יט, ז). The entire framework of the parsha centers around the Shechina and the Beit HaMikdash!

Like the Akeida, we are all (in Israel and the Diaspora) currently in the midst of an *enormous nisayon* - it is in effect Am Yisrael's "Akeida nisayon". HKB"H is watching how we conduct ourselves. Will the yetzer hara succeed in diverting us from our destiny or will Am Yisrael remain steadfast, shut out all the peripheral "clutter" and remain focused on our everlasting devotion to HKB"H, thus fulfilling our final nisayon prior to the Geulah?

Like the Akeida of Avraham, we do not fully know the outcome while we still are in the midst of it. This is the *essence* of the test.

Avraham suffered throughout his life - he was put through ten terrible ordeals. Am Yisrael have suffered for the last 2000 years and we have prevailed – primarily because Avraham prevailed and he inspired the same tenacity in his children.

We must all refrain from trying to second guess HKB"H - stop doing cheshbonot. We need to leave some "elbow room" for HKB"H to do what needs to be done. We need a leap of faith, on a private level and on a national level.

We just have to hold out until the completion of this *final* nisayon and we will emerge triumphant and merit the Geulah, the same way that Avraham and Yitzchak emerged triumphant, by unwaveringly trusting in HKB"H and by virtue of וַיִּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יחד, one with HKB"H and united as one with each other.

Shabbat Shalom

Eliezer Meir Saidel

Machon Lechem Hapanim

www.machonlechemhapanim.org

To subscribe to this weekly Parshat Hashavua, send an email with the subject Subscribe to machonlechemhapanim@gmail.com

To unsubscribe, send an email with the subject Unsubscribe to machonlechemhapanim@gmail.com

To view previous shiurim, go to - www.showbreadinstitute.org/Parshat-Hashavua

If you would like to dedicate a shiur in someone's memory or for refuah, etc., please email machonlechemhapanim@gmail.com with the details.