

## "These are the journeys of Bnei Yisrael"

## The 42 Journeys in the Midbar correspond to the Name of 42 Letters with which Yisrael Were Liberated from Mitzrayim and Will Be Liberated Le'asid La'vo

The upcoming, auspicious Shabbas Kodesh is Rosh Chodesh "Menachem Av," and we will read the double parshiyos of Matos and Masei. It is fitting that we explore the wonderful relationship between the three weeks of Bein HaMetzarim and parshas Masei, which is always read on the second Shabbas of these three weeks. Since we know that Ezra HaSofer arranged the weekly Torah readings of each annual cycle with specific intent, there is clearly a profound connection between parshas Masei and the weeks of Bein HaMetzarim. In this essay, we will endeavor to shed some light on the subject.

### The First Letters of the Words א'לה מ'סעי ב'ני י'שראל Are the First Letters of the Four Galuyos א'דום מ'די ב'בל י'ון

The parsha begins (Bamidbar 33, 1): אלה מסעי בני ישראל אשר" יצאו מארץ מצרים לצבאותם ביד משה ואהרן, ויכתוב משה את מוצאיהם למסעיהם "על פי ה' ואלה מסעיהם למוצאיהם These are the journeys of Bnei Yisrael, who departed the land of Mitzrayim, according to their legions, led by Moshe and Aharon. Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys at the bidding of Hashem, and these were their journeys according to their goings forth. The Megaleh Amukos writes that in this passuk HKB"H alluded to the four galuyos that followed galus Mitzrayim, i.e., Edom, Madai, Yavan (Greece), and Edom (the current exile initiated by Rome): Behold, Yisrael travelled 42 journeys in the midbar; they allude to all future events until the coming of the redeemer. In this parsha, the words א'דום מ'די ב'בל י'ון" allude to א'דום מ'די ב'בל י'ון.

In parshas Vayeira, the Megaleh Amukos presents another wonderful allusion related to this subject. In the first berachah of Shemoneh Esrei, we say: יומביא גואל לבני בניהם למען" "שמו באהבה"—and He brings a redeemer to their children's children for the sake of His name, with love. The word מבי"א can be interpreted as an acronym for מ'די, ב'בל, י'ון, א'דום. Thus, we have another remez to the four exiles from which HKB"H will redeem their children's children for the sake of His name, with love. In light of these comments from the Megaleh Amukos, the intimate relationship between parshas Masei and the weeks of Beis HaMetzarim is evident. For, during these three weeks our focus is on mourning the churban of the Beis HaMikdash and the four galuyos we have had to endure.

Embellishing this thought, it is clear that HKB"H is conveying to us an encouraging, positive message. Galus is not a permanent situation, chas v'shalom! It is merely part of a journey. It is analogous to a person travelling from place to place to make amends and rectify certain flaws but upon completing his task, he will return home for good. This is the implication of the words: "אלה מסעי בני ישראל"—the Jewish people travel from galus to galus to accomplish the mission assigned to them. Upon completing the necessary tikun, HKB"H will liberate them and deliver them from servitude to geulah and from darkness to a brilliant light.

### Galus Mitzrayim Encompassed All Four Galuyos and the Geulah from Mitzrayim **Encompasses All the Galuyos**

It appears that we can interpret the continuation of the opening passuk of the parsha by following the lead of the Megaleh Amukos. The Ohr HaChaim hakadosh notes that initially the text says "מוצאיהם למסעיהם"—their goings forth according to their journeys-whereas at the end of the

passuk, it says "מסעיהם למוצאיהם"—their journeys according to their goings forth—the order is reversed. Additionally, why was it necessary for the Torah to inform us that "Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys at the bidding of Hashem"? Undoubtedly, everything Moshe Rabeinu did was at the bidding of Hashem.

Now, we will introduce what the Bnei Yissaschar (Nissan 4, 3) writes in relation to a teaching in the Yerushalmi (Pesachim 10, 1): "מנין לארבעה כוסות, רבי לוי אמר כנגד ארבעה מלכיות"—from where do we learn the requirement of (drinking) four cups? Rabbi Levi said: They correspond to the four regimes (under whom Yisrael was in galus). The Yifeh Mareh explains that this demonstrates our faith in Hashem; we believe that just as he delivered us from Mitzrayim, so, too, He will deliver us from all four galuyos.

The Bnei Yissaschar elaborates on the relationship between the geulah from Mitzrayim and the other galuyos. He refers to a question posed by the Arizal in Likutei Torah (beginning of Ki Seitzei). Throughout the teachings of Chazal, they only mention four galuyos—Bavel, Madai, Yavan, and Edom. We see this in the following Midrash (B.R. 2, 4): יוהארץ היתה תהו זה גלות בבל, ובהו זה גלות מדי, וחושך זה גלות יון, על פני תהום זה גלות ממלכת "And the earth was chaos" הרשע שאין להם חקר כמו התהום". alludes to galus Bavel; "and void" alludes to galus Madai; "and darkness" alludes to galus Yavan; "over the surface of the deep" alludes to the galus of the wicked regime (Edom), which is unfathomable like the deep. In another Midrash, we learn (ibid. 44, 17): יוהנה אימה חשיכה גדולה נופלת עליו, אימה "זו בבל, חשיכה זו מדי, גדולה זו יון, נופלת עליו זו אדום.—the passuk states: "And behold—a dread, great darkness fell upon him." "A dread" refers to Bavel; "darkness" refers to Madai; "great" refers to Yavan; "fell upon him" refers to Edom. It is perplexing that they do not include the galus of Mitzrayim among the other galuyos.

Our masterful teacher, the Arizal, explains that the four exiles of Bavel, Madai, Yavan, and Edom are individual entities; each one of them opposes one of the four letters of the blessed name Havaya. Bavel corresponds to the letter "yud"; Madai corresponds to the (first) letter "hei"; Yavan corresponds to the letter "vav"; Edom corresponds to the second letter "hei." In contrast, the galus from Mitzrayim was a general, all-encompassing exile. It included all of the

other exiles wrapped up in one. For, it corresponds to the tip of the letter "yud"—"kotzo shel yud." "Kotzo shel yud" incorporates all four letters of the name Havaya. Hence, Chazal only mentioned the four individual galuyos and omitted galus Mitzrayim, since it is not a novelty in and of itself, but rather encompasses all of the exiles.

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Apropos this subject, the Gaon Chida, ztz"l, presents a very nice remez in the commentary Simchas HaRegel on the Haggadah. The chronicle of galus Mitzrayim begins (Shemos 1, 1): "מאלה שמות בני ישראל הבאים מצרימה"—and these are the names of Bnei Yisrael who came (הבאים) to Mitzrayim. The word ב'בל מ'די 'יון א'דום is an acronym for the four exiles: באי"ם indicating that all four exiles were included in Mitzrayim.

Returning to the remarks of the Bnei Yissaschar, he explains the rationale for Chazal's institution of drinking four cups of wine on the first night of Pesach as follows: Seeing as the galus in Mitzrayim incorporated all of the subsequent four galuyos, we should feel heartened and confident from the fact that He liberated us from Mitzrayim that He is destined to liberate us from all four of the galuyos. After all, the klipah of Mitzrayim was so strong and all-inclusive that it contained within it all of the others. So, if He delivered us from Mitzrayim, all the more so that He will deliver us from each of the separate, individual galuyos.

This explains beautifully why Chazal also instituted the four cups corresponding to the four expressions of geulah (ibid. 6, 6): הוצאתי, והצלתי, והאלתי, ולקחתי I shall take you out, I shall rescue you, I shall redeem you, and I shall take you. Since galus Mitzrayim encompassed all four of the galuyos, it stands to reason that the geulah from Mitzrayim also encompassed all four of the geulos. Therefore, four expressions of geulah are mentioned in relation to the geulah from Mitzrayim, since it actually contained four distinct geulos from the four galuyos that were included in galus Mitzrayim.

# "And Mitzrayim shall know that I am Havaya" Who Possesses the Power to Abolish All Four Galuyos that Oppose the Name Havaya

We learned above from the Arizal that each of the four individual galuyos opposed one of the four letters of the sacred name **Havaya**—the Tetragrammaton. Now, since galus Mitzrayim encompassed all four subsequent galuyos,

this means that it opposed all four of the letters of the Tetragrammaton. Based on this understanding, we can begin to comprehend the following dialogue between Moshe and Aharon and Pharaoh. They said to him (ibid. 5, 1): "כה אמר ה' אשר אשמע אלקי ישראל שלח את עמי ויחוגו לי במדבר, ויאמר פרעה מי ה' אשר אשמע So said Havaya, the G-d of Yisrael, "Send out My people that they may celebrate for Me in the midbar." Pharaoh replied, "Who is Havaya that I should heed His voice to release Yisrael? I do not know (recognize) Havaya!"

We find that the very first thing that Pharaoh, the king of the klipah of Mitzrayim, had the audacity to say was: "Who is Havaya that I should heed His voice . . . I do not know recognize Havaya!" Based on what we have learned, the wicked Pharaoh was informing Moshe and Aharon of the magnitude of Mitzrayim's power of tumah. Since galus Mitzrayim was an all-encompassing galus that incorporated all four individual galuyos, it possessed the power to oppose all four of the constituent letters of the name Havaya. Hence, he had the audacity to refuse to acknowledge the authority and power of this sacred name.

Accordingly, the exodus from Mitzrayim with miraculous feats was an exodus from a general, all-encompassing galus that opposed all four letters of the name Havaya. This is the implication of HKB"H's declaration (ibid. 7, 5): "וידעו מצרים כי —and Mitzrayim shall know that I am Havaya, when I stretch out My hand over Mitzrayim; and I shall take Bnei Yisrael out from among them. In other words, by taking Bnei Yisrael out of Mitzrayim, the incredible power of the name Havaya would be revealed—the power to abolish the klipah of Mitzrayim that opposed all four of its letters.

Based on what we have just learned, we can expand on the remez of the Megaleh Amukos presented above. In Shemoneh Esrei, we say: "מביא גואל לבני בניהם למען שמו באהבה". He points out that the word מבי"א is an acronym for מבי"לון א'דום—the four galuyos from which HKB"H will deliver us. We are saying that He will do so "for the sake of His name"—for the sake of the four letters of His name that these galuyos oppose. This will happen in the merit of "ב-אהבה"—two loves. One is the "ahavah" that HKB"H has for His children, Yisrael; the second is the "ahavah" that Yisrael have for their Father in Heaven.

Hence, two times the gematria of אהב"ה (13) equals Havaya (26)—the source of the geulah from all of the galuyos.

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#### "Their goings forth according to their journeys"

We will now explain how all this is alluded to by the opening passuk of our parsha: "א'לה מ'סעי ב'ני ישראל"—these are the journeys of Bnei Yisrael. The first letters of these four words are the first letters of yira מ'די ב'בל יון. These are merely journeys from one galus to the next until we accomplish our mission of clarification and tikun. Once accomplished, HKB"H will liberate us from all of the galuyos with the future geulah. The proof of this eventuality is the text: "אשר יצאו מארץ מצרים" "אשר יצאו מארץ מצרים" שארס departed the land of Mitzrayim, according to their legions, led by Moshe and Aharon. After all, we already departed Mitzrayim that encompassed all four of the subsequent galuyos; so, all the more so, that HKB"H will also deliver us from each individual galus.

This then is the way to interpret the continuation of the passuk: "Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys"—in other words, Moshe explained the relationship between the "going out" of Yisrael from Mitzrayim and the "journeys" they would make in the subsequent galuyos. As explained, they would be journeys that we would complete and move on (be liberated) from; because "yetzias Mitzrayim" was "at the bidding of Havaya"—accomplished and facilitated by the four letters of Havaya, which the klipah of Mitzrayim opposed. So, if HKB"H took us out of Mitzrayim, which opposed all four letters of the sacred name, He will surely take us out of each of the four individual galuyos.

Then, the passuk concludes: "And these were their journeys according to their goings forth." In other words, since the geulah from Mitzrayim was the root of all the geulos, it behooves Yisrael to always remember the association of the journeys in galus with the going forth (the exodus) from galus Mitzrayim. This will serve to hearten them always. For, just as HKB"H took them out of the all-encompassing galus of Mitzrayim, all the more so that He will take us out of every one of the individual galuyos. This is the implication of the word "הואלה"—and these. As we know, the "vav" indicates that these are in addition to something prior; it relates "their journeys" throughout the four galuyos to "their going forth" from Mitzrayim.

# The 42 Journeys Correspond to the Name of 42 of "אנא בכח"

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Following this illuminating path, we will now establish a fascinating relationship between parshas Masei and the weeks of Bein HaMetzarim during which we yearn for the future geulah from all the galuyos. We will refer to the Magen Avraham (O.C. 428, 8): It is written in the Tzror HaMor (Masei) that the 42 journeys in parshas Masei should not be interrupted, because they correspond to the name of 42. In other words, it is not appropriate to stop in the middle of the reading of the 42 journeys to call another person up to the Torah.

The source for this association is found in the Arizal's Likutei Torah: הנה נזכר בכאן מ"ב מסעות, והוא שישראל יצאו ממצרים" "שם מ"ב"—behold, 42 journeys are mentioned here, indicating that Yisrael departed Mitzrayim by means of the "shem mem-Beis." Furthermore, the Arizal asserts that HKB"H employed the "shem mem-Beis" to strike Pharaoh a powerful, decisive blow. The Agra D'Kallah writes that this name is alluded to by the words "אלה מסעי בני ישראל"; since the first letters of the words מ"ב מיסעי ב'ני ב'ני are מ'סעי ב'ני ב'ני. They are referring to the holy name of forty-two letters, which we mention every day in the Shacharis service, during the korbanos, in the tefilah of "אנא בכה". This prayer is attributed to the divine Tanna Rabbi Nechuniah ben Hakanah and is based on 42 letters, divided into seven separate names—each containing six letters.

Now, we have a fundamental principle (Ta'anis 9a) that there is nothing that is not alluded to in the Torah. Thus, we can suggest a wonderful remez for the Arizal's assertion that HKB"H struck Pharaoh a forceful blow with the "shem memBeis" in the passuk (Shemos 9, 15): די עתה שלחתי את ידי ואך אותך "כי עתה שלחתי את ידי ואך אותך בדבר ותכחד מן הארץ" —for now I could have sent My hand and stricken you and your people with the pestilence and you would have been wiped out of the land. The gematria of this entire passuk as it is written equals 7,701. This is the precise gematria of the "shem mem-Beis": אב"ג-ית"ץ, קר"ע-שט"ן, יג"ל-פז"ק, שק"ו-צי"ת. נג"ד-יכ"ש, בט"ר-צת"ג, חק"ב-טנ"ע, יג"ל-פז"ק, שק"ו-צי"ת.

# The Divine Tanna Rashbi Teaches that the "Shem Mem-Beis" Went Down with Yaakov Avinu to Mitzrayim

Proceeding along this sublime path, we will now clarify the Arizal's assertion that Yisrael's exodus from Mitzrayim was facilitated by the "shem mem-Beis" of Ana B'Koach. In the Zohar hakadosh (Shemos 4b), the divine Tanna Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai presents a remez from the text at the beginning of galus Mitzrayim that the holy Shechinah went down to Mitzrayim with Yaakov Avinu with the "shem mem-Beis." The passuk reads (ibid. 1, 1): יואלה שמות בני ישראל הבאים מצרימה את "ואלה שמות בני ישראל הבאים מצרימה את and these are the names of the Children of Yisrael who came to Mitzrayim; with Yaakov, each man and his household came. In the gloss of Rabeinu Chaim Vital (1), he explains that the gematria of אוואל"ה is 42; thus, the passuk alludes to the fact that 42—the "shem mem-Beis"—came to Mitzrayim with Yaakov.

Let us combine these two bits of information. The holy Shechinah descended with Yaakov Avinu to Mitzrayim in the form of the **42-letter** name; this is alluded to in the first passuk related to galus Mitzrayim. They also exited Mitzrayim with this name by travelling **42** journeys through the midbar prior to entering Eretz Yisrael; this is alluded to in the first passuk of parshas Masei by the words מ'סעי ב'ני, whose first letters are מ'סעי ב'ני (**42**).

Let us interpret the promise HKB"H made to Yaakov Avinu when He instructed him to go down to Mitzrayim in this light (Bereishis 46, 3): אל תירא מרדה מצרימה כי לגוי גדול אשימך שם, אנכי אלך גם עלה ויוסף ישית ידו על עיניך" —do not be afraid of descending to Mitzrayim, for I will make you into a great nation there. I shall descend with you to Mitzrayim, and I shall also surely bring you up; and Yosef will place his hand on your eyes. HKB"H hinted to Yaakov that He would accompany him down to Mitzrayim with the "shem mem-Beis," watch over the people of Yisrael during that galus, and liberate them from Mitzrayim with the "shem mem-Beis."

## Yosef HaTzaddik Withstood His Yetzer with the "Shem Mem-Beis" which His Father Yaakov Had Taught Him

Continuing on this sacred journey, we will now explain what HKB"H added to His promise to Yaakov: "And Yosef will place his hand on your eyes." The Midrash teaches us (V.R. 32, 5): Yosef went down to Mitzrayim and guarded himself against immorality and, in his merit, Yisrael guarded themselves against immorality. Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said: The guarding against immoral behavior was itself sufficient to warrant Yisrael being redeemed on its

**account.** In other words, Yosef HaTzaddik paved the way for all of Yisrael to refrain from immorality and maintain their kedushah during their time in Mitzrayim; and in that merit, they were redeemed.

The Sifsei Kohen (Bereishis 39, 3), one of the young disciples of the Arizal teaches us a tremendous chiddush. The success of Yosef HaTzaddik in Mitzrayim was attributable to the "shem mem-Beis," which he had learned from his father. He bases this on a remez in the passuk (ibid. 39, 3): אוני בי ה' אדוניו כי ה' אדוניו כי ה' אדוניו כי ה' אדוניו בי ה' מצליח בידו"—his master saw that Hashem was with him, and all that he would do Hashem would make it succeed through his hand. The first letters of the words מ'צליח ב'ידו are "mem-Beis." He finds a similar remez in another passuk further on (ibid. 23): אין שר בית הסוהר רואה ב' מאומה בידו באשר ה' אתו ואשר הוא עושה ה' מצליח" warden did not scrutinize anything that was in his custody, because Hashem was with him; and whatever he would do Hashem would make successful. Here, too, the first letters of the words מ'אומה ב'ידו are "mem-Beis."

Additionally, the Sifsei Kohen (ibid. 7) teaches us another important chiddush: The "shem mem-Beis" is capable of overcoming all the forces of the "sitra achra"—the forces of evil. In fact, because he was equipped with this name, Yosef was able to withstand his yetzer in Mitzrayim; Yaakov had taught him this name, before he was sold. Yosef was also afforded protection against the "ayin hara"; this protection was rescinded when he began curling his hair—i.e., he became haughty. Hence, he also needed help to overcome his yetzer, since he was suddenly vulnerable to the advances of his master's wife.

This additional help was provided by the image of his father Yaakov. As we are taught in the Gemara (Sotah 36b): באותה שעה"
"באותה שעה בחלון"—at that moment, the visage of his father came and appeared to him in the window. We can propose the following: Apparently, when Yosef began displaying signs of haughtiness, he forgot the powerful "shem mem-Beis." Hence, HKB"H came to his rescue by having the image of Yaakov appear to him in the window; his memory was refreshed enabling him to withstand his yetzer by employing the power of the "shem mem-Beis."

Hashem has provided me with an amazing insight. There is a remez to the "shem mem-Beis" in the passuk where Yosef refuses the advances of his master's wife (ibid. 39, 8): "וימאן"

"ויאמר אל אשת אדניו הן אדני לא ידע אתי מה בבית וכל אשר יש לו נתן בידי"
he refused; he said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know anything that is with me in the house, and all that he has, he placed in my custody. The gematria of this entire passuk as written in the Torah is exactly equal to the "name of 42 letters": אב"ג-ית"ץ, קר"ע-שט"ן, נג"ד-יכ"ש, בט"ר-צת"ג. בק"נ-צי"ת, שק"ו-צי"ת.

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We have now achieved a better understanding of the Arizal's assertion that the exodus of Yisrael from Mitzrayim was facilitated by the "shem mem-Beis." We have learned that Yisrael merited being liberated, because they refrained from sexual immorality. They did so, because they followed in the footsteps of Yosef HaTzaddik. Yosef maintained his kedushah in Mitzrayim with the help of the "shem mem-Beis" that he was taught by his father Yaakov. Therefore, Yisrael merited exiting Mitzrayim by having HKB"H strike the Egyptians a mighty blow with the "shem mem-Beis."

This illuminates for us the remark HKB"H made to Yaakov Avinu: "Do not be afraid of descending to Mitzrayim, for I will make you into a great nation there. I shall descend with you to Mitzrayim (as the "shem mem-Beis"), and I shall also surely bring you up (with 42 journeys based on the "shem mem-Beis"); and Yosef will place his hand on your eyes. Since Yosef's ability to maintain his kedushah in Mitzrayim is attributable to the power of the "shem mem-Beis" that you, Yaakov Avinu, taught him, he will be the one to place his hand over your eyes. Through him, you will see how the "shem mem-Beis" actually has the auspicious capacity to protect Yisrael—especially after Yosef HaTzaddik already paved the way for them.

# The Future Geulah Will Also Be with the "Shem Mem-Beis"

We have now reached the final leg of this enlightening journey—understanding the amazing connection between parshas Masei and the future geulah. Let us introduce the fascinating insight of the Tzror HaMor (Masei), which should provide us with tremendous moral support in our emunah and bitachon in Hashem throughout the galuyos, in anticipation of the future geulah, which will also involve the "shem mem-Beis":

Our Rabbis of blessed memory said that 42 journeys were recorded here as an allusion to the sacred name of

42 letters . . . Also, it appears that these journeys were recorded here in the name of Hashem to instill in us a deep belief and confidence in the future geulah. Concerning the travails we endure in galus, we should rest assured that Hashem sees and watches all of our exiles and especially this difficult fourth one. He recorded these journeys to promise us beyond a shadow of a doubt that even though we will endure much suffering, He will sustain us and redeem us from this galus. It will be just like "yetzias Mitzrayim," where they suffered backbreaking labor for many years; yet, Hashem sent them saviors to rescue them from their suffering.

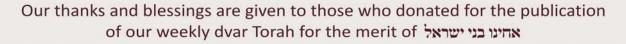
Therefore, He began by saying: "These are the journeys of Bnei Yisrael who departed Eretz Mitzrayim led by Moshe and Aharon"... This hints at the fact that even though they did not deserve to leave Mitzrayim based on their own deeds, they were redeemed by Moshe and Aharon and in their merit. The same will hold true with the future geulos—

He will send them a savior and mentor to save them. In particular, the fourth geulah will be led by two mashiachs—Mashiach ben Yosef and Mashiach ben David.

This then is the encouraging message HKB"H is conveying to us at the beginning of our parsha: "א'לה מ'סעי ב'ני ישראל". The first letters of these four words are an acronym for the four galuyos: א'דום מ'די ב'בל יון. They are only "journeys of Bnei Yisrael," from which they will be released and liberated. The proof of this is: "ששר יצאו מארץ מצרים"—the exodus from Egypt which encompassed all four galuyos. Thus, all the more so that HKB"H will redeem us and liberate us from each individual galus. "ייכתוב משה את מוצאיהם למסעיהם על פי ה" שואלה לפוצאיהם למוצאיהם למוצאיהם למוצאיהם למוצאיהם למוצאיהם "יוכתוב משה את מוצרים"—Moshe recorded that they departed Mitzrayim guided by the four letters of Havaya that the klipah of Mitzrayim opposed. The text concludes: "ואלה 'יואלה 'יוא



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