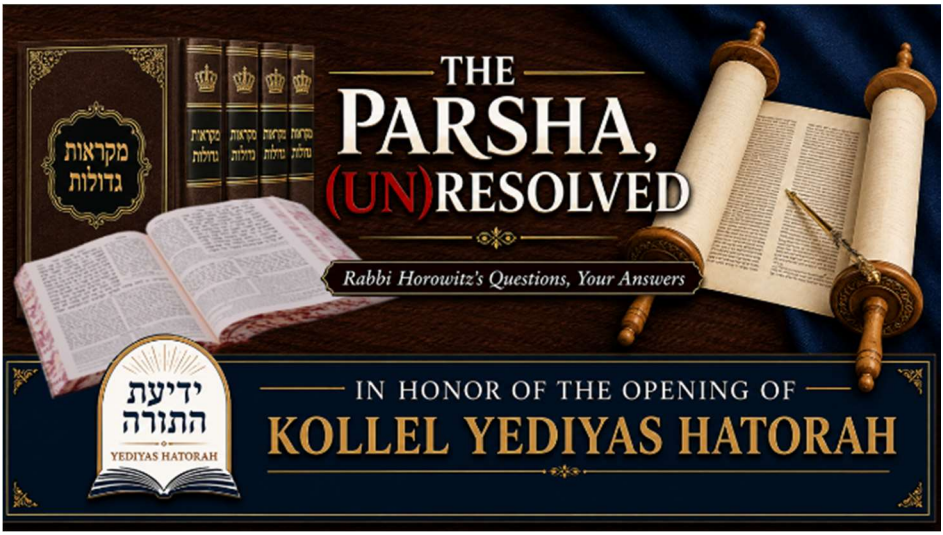


Parshas V'Zos HaBracha

שנת תשפ"ז

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

Was Shevet Gad Strong or Weak?

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THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

Was Shevet Gad Strong or Weak?

לג:כ — וּלְגָד אָמַר בָּרוּךְ מַרְחִיב גָּד כְּלָבִיא שָׁכֵן וְטָרַף זְרוֹעַ אַף־קָדְקֹד׃

"And of Gad he said: Blessed is He Who broadens Gad, he dwells like a lion, and tears the arm together with the crown of the head."

Rashi explains, "*He dwells like a lion* — Because his territory was near the border, he is compared to lions, for those who live near the border must be mighty. *And tears the arm together with the crown of the head* — Their slain could be recognized by their wounds, for they would sever the head together with the arm in a single blow." Rashi thus describes Shevet Gad as exceptionally mighty, precisely the type of warriors suited to live along the border.

Yet earlier, on pasuk 18, Rashi writes that Gad was one of the five weakest shevatim, "These five shevatim whom he blessed last — Zevulun, Gad, Dan, Naftali, and Asher — he repeated their names in order to strengthen and empower them, because they were the weakest of all the shevatim… Yosef brought these before Pharaoh because they appeared weak, so that Pharaoh would not appoint them as officers in his army."

THE QUESTION **Rashi seemingly contradicts himself regarding Shevet Gas's strength.**

Consider the question and send your approach before next week's issue.

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION & ANSWERS

LAST WEEK'S QUESTION

Parshas HaAzinu 5787

לב:ג כִּי שֵׁם ה' אֶקְרָא הָבוּ גֹדֶל לֵאלֹהֵינוּ:

When I call out the Name of Hashem, ascribe greatness to our God.

Rashi explains: "From here Chazal learned that after a bracha in the Beis HaMikdash, one responds, Baruch shem kevod malchuso (Ta'anis 16b)."

But when we open the Gemara in Ta'anis, we find the following:

"In the Beis Hamikdash, however, the practice is different, since one does not answer amen in the Beis HaMikdash. How do we know this? The pasuk states (Nechemiah 9:5), Rise and bless Hashem your God from the World until the World, and let them bless Your glorious Name, which is exalted above every blessing and praise. Perhaps one expression of praise would suffice for all the berachos? The pasuk therefore says, 'Exalted above every blessing and praise, give Him praise for each and every bracha. What, then, does one say in the Beis Hamikdash? Blessed is Hashem, God, the God of Israel, from the World until the World etc. And the people respond, Baruch shem kevod malchuso le'olam va'ed."

The halacha quoted by Rashi is indeed found there—but the Gemara derives it from an entirely different pasuk!

THE QUESTION **Why does Rashi derive this Halacha from a different source than the Gemara?**

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS

1. Several Talmidei Chachamim pointed out that Rashi uses a positive formulation, "From here they said that one answers *Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuso* after a berachah in the Mikdash," whereas the Gemara uses a negative formulation, "From where do we know that one does not answer Amen in the Mikdash?" At first glance, one might suggest that the Gemara derives from the pesukim in Nechemiah only that one does not answer "Amen," while it remains unclear what one does answer. Our pasuk, "Havu godel l'Elokeinu," would then teach that the proper response is to ascribe greatness to Hashem by saying "Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuso l'olam va'ed."

However, this distinction does not seem correct at all. The pesukim in Nechemiah themselves indicate even more clearly what the response is, as it says explicitly, "Vivarachu Shem Kevodecha u'meromam." We are therefore forced to understand that when the Gemara says, "From where do we know that one does not answer Amen in the Mikdash," it includes not only what one does not answer, but also what one does answer—namely, "Baruch Shem."

2. It is also worth noting the Gemara in Yoma 37b. On the Mishnah, "And this is what he would say: Ana Hashem, I have sinned, transgressed, and rebelled before You… as it is written in the Torah of Moshe Your servant, For on this day he shall atone…, and they would answer after him, Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuso l'olam va'ed," the Gemara explains that this is learned from our passuk, "When I call out the Name of Hashem, ascribe greatness to our God."

It would seem, however, that the Gemara there means as follows - although we already know that after a berachah in the Mikdash one answers "Baruch Shem," as learned in Meseches Taanis from the pesukim in Nechemiah, the Mishnah here teaches an additional point, that even upon hearing the Name of Hashem when it is not part of a berachah, one must also answer "Baruch Shem." If so, this is still not the source for Rashi's statement here concerning the response after a berachah in the Mikdash.

3. R' Dovid Bleier (Beitar Illit) showed me the **Re'em** on Rashi, who writes that one can derive from this pasuk that at times it is not sufficient merely to answer "Amen" to a berachah. "Amen" contains an affirmation of the words that were said, but it does not by itself fulfill the requirement of "havu godel." Nevertheless, the **Nachalas Yaakov** writes that this pasuk still gives no indication of any distinction between the Mikdash and other places. Therefore, the primary source is the pesukim in Nechemiah, where the entire concept is stated more explicitly, as cited by the Gemara in Taanis. According to this, Rashi does not mean that the entire din of answering "Baruch Shem" in the Mikdash is derived from the pasuk of "Ki Shem Hashem ekra." Rather, our pasuk also reflects the general concept of responding with "Baruch Shem," while the full derashah, including the distinction between the Mikdash and the gevulin, is found in the Gemara in Taanis based on the pesukim in Nechemiah.

How it Works

Each week follows a simple, two-part structure:

The Question: We present a sharp, unresolved kasha on the Parsha for you to discuss over Shabbos.

The Answers: A week later, we will present and critique listener-submitted answers following the presentation of the next week's question.

The conversation doesn't stop there—responses can continue to be discussed, and select insights will eventually be compiled and published in **a dedicated sefer**.

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