

# OHRNET

THE OHR SOMAYACH TORAH MAGAZINE ON THE INTERNET

## PARSHA INSIGHTS

### THE GREATEST BLESSING

***“And Hashem said to Avram, ‘Go for yourself from your land and from your birth-place and from the house of your father to the land which I will show you, and I will bless you and I will magnify your name, and you shall be a blessing.’” (12:1)***

When Hashem commanded Avram to leave home, He gave him many blessings. As Rashi explains: “*And I will make of you a great nation*” is a promise of children; “*I will bless you*” denotes material success; and “*I will magnify your name*” is the promise that Hashem would perfect Avram, making him free from blemish and defect.

These blessings are so extensive that it’s difficult to imagine how they could be added to. However, the greatest blessing is yet to come. As the verse above concludes: “*And you shall be a blessing.*”

The greatest blessing is to be a blessing to others. To help them. To care for them. To be there for others in their times of joy and sadness.

The only way to achieve real happiness in life is to help others to be happy.

### ON BEING ONESELF

***“And Hashem said to Avram ‘Go for yourself...’” (12:1)***

The great tzaddik, Reb Zushia of Annipoli once said: “When I get to the next world, the World of Truth, if they say to me: ‘Zushia, why weren’t you like the Ba’al Shem Tov?’ that’s not going to frighten me one bit. How can you compare me to the Ba’al Shem Tov?”

And if they say to me: ‘Zushia, why weren’t you like the Maggid of Mezrich?’ that’s not going to frighten me either. Look at me and look at the Maggid of Mezrich! What frightens me is when they say to me: ‘Zushia! Why weren’t you Zushia! The Zushia that you could have been, why weren’t you even that?’”

“Go for yourself” can also be translated as “Go to yourself...” The mystical sources explain this to mean: “Go to the

root of your *neshama* (soul).” In the next world, there will be no claims against a person that he failed to live up to the potential of others. However, it is our duty to maximize our talents, to push out to the very limits of our abilities so that we bring the root of our souls to flower. It is only in this way that we will be, at least, our own “Zushias.”

“When you look at another person, realize that he is a star! A galactic mirror, reflecting the infinite light of the Creator. He may seem very small to you. He may not have achieved much. But his potential is vaster than the trackless emptiness of space.”

### THE TOWERING INFERNO

***“Go for yourself” (12:1)***

There was a traveler who was journeying from place to place. He came upon a large mansion ablaze with light, sumptuously furnished. He said “Don’t tell me that this mansion has no master!” No sooner had he spoken than the owner of the mansion peeked out and said to him: “I am the master of the mansion.”

Similarly, Avraham Avinu looked at the world and said “Don’t tell me that this world — so perfectly furnished — has no master!” Then, the Holy One, Blessed be

He, peeked out and said to him: “I am the Master of the world.”

Prophecy is given to those who exert themselves. If a person raises himself to the limits of his righteousness, if he uses his intellectual and critical faculties to their utmost, then Hashem will grant him understanding above the normal human level.

Avraham saw the reality of Creation — the mansion ablaze with light — and used his own human resources to come to the inescapable truth of the existence of the Creator. At that point, Hashem reached out to Avraham and gave him prophecy.

Another idea.

Avraham saw a mansion which was “ablaze (with light).” The expression for “ablaze” — *dolekes* — can also mean “burning.” Why should seeing a burning mansion be compelling evidence of the Creator?

When something is totally and utterly burned it returns to ash, to the level where everything is the same; it has been reduced to its elemental self. It has no form that sets it apart from any other thing in the Creation.

Avraham Avinu saw the world, the mansion, as if it was all one element, one unity. He saw the disparate nature of this world, this “mansion,” as “burned,” reduced to an ineffable oneness, reflecting of its Creator. Avraham perceived the unity of nature and, through this, the Unity of Hashem.

That’s the greatest of blessings.

### ACTING LIKE STARS

***“And (Hashem) took him outside and said to him ‘Look up, please, at the heavens and count the stars, if you can count them;’ and He said to him ‘So, too, will be your descendants.’” (14:24)***

Two great rabbis of the previous generation, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein and Rabbi Yaakov Kaminetzky, were once seen standing beside the chauffeur-driven car which was to take them home, discussing which of them was going to get out of the

## PARSHA OVERVIEW

Ten generations have passed since the time of Noah. Man has descended to lower spiritual depths. In the year 1948 after the Creation, Avram is born. Through observing the world, Avram comes to the inescapable Truth of Hashem's existence, and thus merits that Hashem reveal Himself to him. At the beginning of this week's Parsha, Hashem tells Avram to leave his land, his relatives and his father's house and travel to an unknown land where Hashem will make him into a great nation. Avram leaves, taking with him his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, their servants, and those who he converted to faith in Hashem. When they reach the land of Canaan, Hashem appears to Avram and tells him that this is the land that He will give to his descendants. A famine ensues and Avram is forced to relocate to Egypt to find food. Realizing that his wife's beauty would cause his death at the hand of the Egyptians, Avram asks her to say that she is his sister. Sarai is taken to the Pharaoh, but Hashem afflicts the Pharaoh and his court with severe plagues and she is released unharmed. Avram returns to *Eretz Yisrael* (Canaan) with much wealth given to him by the Egyptians. After a quarrel over grazing rights between their shepherds, Avram decides to part ways with his nephew Lot. Lot chooses to live in

the rich but corrupt city of Sodom in the fertile plain of the Jordan. A war breaks out between the kings of the region, and Sodom is defeated. Lot is taken captive. Together with a handful of his converts, Avram rescues Lot, miraculously overpowering vastly superior forces, but demurs from accepting any of the spoils of the battle. In a prophetic covenant, Hashem reveals to Avram that his offspring will be exiled to a strange land where they will be oppressed for 400 years, after which they will emerge with great wealth and return to *Eretz Yisrael*, their irrevocable inheritance. Sarai is barren and gives Hagar, her Egyptian hand-maiden, to Avram in the hope that she will provide them with a child. Hagar becomes arrogant when she discovers that she is pregnant. Sarai deals harshly with her and Hagar flees. On the instruction of an angel Hagar returns to Avram and gives birth to Yishmael. The Parsha concludes with Hashem commanding Avram to circumcise himself and his offspring throughout the generations as a covenant between Hashem and his seed. Hashem changes Avram's name to Avraham, and Sarai's name to Sarah. Hashem promises Avraham a son, Yitzhak, despite Avraham being ninety-nine years old and Sarah ninety. On that day, Avraham circumcises himself, Yishmael and all his household.

## HAFTORAH: ISAIAH 40:27-41:16

Avraham Avinu is known as *Ha-Ivri* — the Hebrew — which means "the one who crossed over." He crossed over from being an idol worshipper to serving the living G-d.

Even if the rest of the world is on the other side, the Hebrew — the one who crosses over — stands up and says "Stop worshipping your idols of stone, of money, of worldly power, and acknowledge that Hashem alone is G-d."

The task of the Jewish People has always been to deliver this message to the world. The prophet Isaiah encourages Israel to persevere both in the face of

their own failures and exile, and the resistance and apathy of the nations.

Hashem has promised that ultimately they must prevail, for though the Jewish People may seem worm-like in their insignificance and powerlessness, they will vanquish those who now seem invincible.

### DUST AND JEWELS

*"...As much dust as Avraham used, turned into swords..." (41:2).*

Nachum Ish Gamzu was a man whose very name expressed his essence. No matter what happened to him he would always say "This is also for the good!" He never doubted that what Hashem does is always for the best.

Nachum was chosen to travel to the Emperor and present him with a box filled with precious stones as tribute from the Jewish People. On the way, unknown to Nachum, the jewels were switched with

worthless dust. With great ceremony the "jewels" were presented to the Emperor, and slowly the box was opened in front of him.

The Emperor's rage knew no bounds at this unbelievable insult from the Jews. Suddenly, the prophet Elyahu appeared in the guise of one of the Emperor's ministers and said: "Your Imperial Majesty, this must be the special dust that the Jews' forefather Abraham used to defeat the four kings, as it says '...As much dust as Avraham used turned into swords...'" Let us, at least, try the dust and see if it works for us as well."

The Emperor agreed and Hashem caused a miracle — the dust indeed proved to be lethal against the Emperor's enemies.

We must remember that even in the darkest moments of exile, when all our jewels look like dust, Hashem will bring the prophet Elyahu to announce the dawn of redemption.

• Midrash

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## LOVE OF THE LAND

*Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and Eretz Yisrael*

## WORTH MOVING FOR

Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Asi, who studied Torah in *Eretz Yisrael*, would leave their place of study when it became too hot and move to the shade. On cool days they would move from a cold spot to where they could get some warmth from the sun. (*Kesuvos 112b*) They bothered to make these moves, explains Rashi, in order to avoid having any complaints about the

climate of *Eretz Yisrael*. These two Talmudic giants could apparently have endured the discomfort of heat or cold and would have preferred to do so rather than lose the precious time required for relocation. But this might have stirred a fleeting thought of discontent with the climate of the land they so loved. They therefore decided it was worth making this sacrifice.

## PARSHA Q&A ?

1. What are three things diminished by travel?
2. "And all the families of the earth will be blessed through you." What does this mean?
3. Who were the souls that Avraham and Sarah "made?"
4. Which one of Noach's three sons received the Land of Canaan as part of his inheritance?
5. What two results did Avraham hope to achieve by saying that Sarah was his sister?
6. Why did Avraham's shepherds rebuke Lot's shepherds?
7. Who was Amrafel and why was he called that?
8. What does "hera" mean (verse 14:10).
9. Why did the "palit" tell Avraham that Lot had been captured?
10. Who accompanied Avraham into battle against the four kings?
11. Why did Avraham give "maaser" to Malki-Tzedek specifically?
12. Why didn't Avraham accept any money from the king of S'dom?
13. Why was Avraham anxious after he defeated the four kings?
14. When did the decree of four hundred years of exile begin?
15. What did Hashem indicate with his promise to Avraham that he would "come to his ancestors in peace?"
16. How did Hashem fulfill his promise to Avraham that he would be buried in "a good old age?"
17. Why did Avraham die five years before his allotted time?
18. Why did the Jewish people need to wait until the fourth generation until they returned to Eretz Canaan?
19. Who was Hagar's father?
20. How old was Avraham when Yishmael was born?

## BONUS QUESTION?

Rashi never 'just' comments; something in the text always impels him to do so. Rashi's comments are answers to unspoken questions and difficulties arising from a thoughtful reading of the Torah. Therefore, anyone who wants a true understanding of Rashi's classic Torah commentary must always ask "What's bothering Rashi?"

**Bereishis 15:1 "After these things, the word of Hashem came to Avram in a vision saying 'Fear not Avram, I am your shield....'"**

Rashi explains: "After this miracle was wrought for him in that he killed the kings, he was worried, saying 'Perhaps I have already received reward for all my good deeds.' Therefore, G-d said to him, 'Fear not Avram, I am your shield' against punishment; for you will not be punished on account of all these people whom you have killed..."

What's bothering Rashi? (Why didn't Rashi explain simply that Avram was afraid that the allies of the four kings would regroup and try to get revenge against him?)

*answer on page six*

## I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

**"And it was in the days of Amraphel...they waged war...(Bereishis 13:1,2)"** The war of "The four kings against the five kings" described in this week's Parasha was the first war ever waged in history.

• Midrash Tanchuma Lech Lecha 7

## PARSHA Q&A!

### Answers to this Week's Questions!

*All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary unless otherwise stated.*

1. 12:2 - Offspring, wealth and fame.
2. 12:3 - A person will say to his son, "You should be like Avraham."
3. 12:5 - People they converted to the worship of Hashem.
4. 12:6 - Shem.
5. 12:13 - That the Egyptians would let him live and give him presents.
6. 13:7 - Lot's shepherds grazed their flocks in privately owned fields.
7. 14:1 - Amrafel was Nimrod. He said (*amar*) to Avraham to fall (fel) into the fiery furnace.
8. 14:10 - To a mountain.
9. 14:13 - He hoped Avraham would die trying to save Lot, so that he might be able to marry Sarah.
10. 14:14 - His servant, Eliezer.
11. 14:20 - Because Malki-Tzedek was a *kohen*.
12. 14:23 - Hashem had promised Avraham wealth, and Avraham didn't want the King of S'dom to be the one to take credit for it.
13. 15:1 - He was afraid that his victory was his reward for all his good deeds.
14. 15:13 - With the birth of Yitzchak.
15. 15:15 - That his father, Terach, repented and became righteous.
16. 15:15 - Avraham lived to see his son, Yishmael, repent and become righteous, and he died before his grandson, Esau, became wicked.
17. 15:15 - So as not to see Esau begin his pursuit of evil.
18. 15:16 - They needed to wait until the Amorites had sinned sufficiently to deserve expulsion.
19. 16:1 - Pharaoh.
20. 16:16 - Eighty-six.

## WEEKLY DAF

### BERACHOS 37 - 43

#### THE RIGHT WORD

What blessing does one make on bread?

Surely everyone knows the answer to that question is "*Hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz*" (He Who has brought bread forth from the earth).

But not all the Sages agreed on the first word of this phrase. One opinion is that "*Motzi*" should be said because it is past tense while "*Hamotzi*" is future tense. Since the bread you are about to eat has already been brought forth from the earth the past tense is more appropriate. There is a consensus that "*Motzi*" is past tense and a difference of opinion as to whether "*Hamotzi*" is as well.

It would therefore seem that the safe thing to do would be to say "*Motzi*," which is acceptable to all. Nevertheless, the ruling of the Gemara is that we say "*Hamotzi*" which is proper only according to one school of thought.

The reason for this, explains Tosefos on the basis of the Jerusalem Talmud, is that the word in the bless-

ing preceding this controversial word is "*Haalam*." If we were to follow it with "*Motzi*" we would have a word ending with an "m" sound coming before one which begins with an "m" sound and face the risk of running the two words together as a single word.

But don't we face the same problem in regard to the two words "*lechem*" and "*min*"? True, adds Tosefos, but our Sages did not wish to tamper with the phrase "*lechem min ha'aretz*" which is taken from a passage in *Tehillim* (104:4). That passage, incidentally, contains ten words, notes Tosefos, and thus provides a hint to place the ten fingers of both our hands on the bread when we make our "*Hamotzi*" blessing on it.

• *Berachos 38b*

#### THE FIFTH SENSE

Where is the source in Scripture for the concept of making a blessing on the enjoyment we derive from a pleasant fragrance?

"Let every soul give praise to Hashem" says King David (*Tehillim*

150:6). What pleasure is there that only the soul enjoys and not the body? Surely it is the pleasure which comes from the sense of smell.

Maharsha notes that animals, like men, have fine senses, including the sense of smell, despite the fact that they have no souls. He suggests, however, that animals, which have only a life force and not a soul, do not have the capacity to enjoy the fragrances they smell (as an instinct to aid their survival), an enjoyment reserved for the soul within men.

An interesting observation about smell has been made by the great Chassidic thinkers. In the sin committed by Adam and Chava when they ate from the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, virtually all of the senses were involved. They heard the incitement of the serpent, saw the beauty of the fruit, touched and tasted it. All of these senses therefore became affected with materialism. Only the sense of smell was not involved in this sin and it therefore remains pristine enough to still be enjoyed by the pure soul.

• *Berachos 43b*

continued from page one

car first.

As Reb Moshe lived nearer, and would thus get out first, he got in the back and Reb Yaakov got in the front. The reason for their discussion was that if Reb Moshe had sat in the front, then when he exited the driver would look like a chauffeur, and they were concerned for the dignity of the driver.

The Ba'al Shem Tov explains that the descendants of Avraham are like stars. From our point of view the stars seem like insignificant specks of light, whereas in the

heavens they are in reality entire universes.

When you look at another person, realize that he is a star! (Not the Hollywood variety.) A galactic mirror, reflecting the infinite light of the Creator. He may seem very small to you. He may not have achieved much. But his potential is vaster than the trackless emptiness of space.

When you see people in this light, you will behave towards them with great respect, and when you show others

respect, they gain respect for themselves. This in turn can give them the encouragement to fulfill their potential greatness and shine all the more brightly.

Sources:

**Greatest Blessing** - Rabbi Meir Chadash  
**On Being Oneself** - Rabbi Shlomo Yosef Zevin  
**The Towering Inferno** - Midrash Rabba; Chazon Ish; Rabbi Moshe Shapiro  
as heard from Rabbi Nota Schiller  
**Acting Like Stars** - Rabbi Zelig Pliskin;  
Mayana Shel Torah; Rabbi Nissan Wolpin

#### PARSHA INSIGHTS

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## A JEWISH ENVIRONMENT

**Bill Clark <whcii@msn.com> wrote:**

*I have a question for the Rabbi! I have been writing a column on energy conservation for a local Jewish magazine, The Jewish Outlook, in Austin Texas. I have been proud to cite many Biblical and Rabbinic references to encourage people to "repair the world" and to practice energy conservation.*

*Then I read about an organization in Israel that makes gadgets that let people follow the Sabbath rules, but still live in the modern world. One is a light that stays on all the time, but has a cover that can be taken off when light is needed. Mostly they get around the injunction against using an electrical switch that way — by keeping things on all the time. Wasting energy, in other words.*

*Which is more important — to conserve energy and help renew the world in a sincere effort — or to adhere to the Sabbath in an almost comical circumvention of the rules? I think it is clearly the former.*

Dear Bill Clark,

The gadget you mention is used mainly in hospitals. When the light is covered, the patient can sleep, and it can be uncovered whenever the patient needs care. At home most people use timers, programmed before Shabbat to turn lights off and on. These timers save energy.

But I'm in the dark about something: What is it about this gadget that "comically circumvents the rules?" Is blocking the light a "circumvention of the rules?" If so, we shouldn't shut our bedroom door Friday night if it blocks the hall light. We shouldn't shut our eyes, because then our eyelids block the light! We should stay awake the whole night staring straight into the light!

But to answer the question "which is more important, observing the Torah or conserving energy" — observing the Torah is more important. G-d, as Creator, owns the world and has the right to direct the use of its resources.

Remember the movie "Bambi vs. Godzilla?" (It was a very short film.) Your portrayal of "Environment vs. Shabbat" reminds me of it: Shabbat, the giant monster, "squishes" the tender Environment

with one stomp of its foot. The End.

But imagine — what would happen if everyone in the world kept Shabbat? Imagine one day a week when no cars, planes or boats guzzled gas, no factories coughed out polluted stench, no TVs, stereos, or computers leached electricity?

Just imagine the health benefits if everyone rested once a week! And how many road deaths (the majority of which occur on weekends) would be avoided. Most of all, imagine the positive environmental impact if we all took one day a week to recognize the beauty of G-d's world. If one day in seven were spent thinking: "This is G-d's world, not mine!"

No, I don't think Shabbat observance is going to eat a hole in the ozone layer. It might even mend one.

## FINS ON THE SCALE

**Miles Levin from Pittsburgh <mb1@andrew.cmu.edu> wrote:**

*For fish to be Kosher, the Torah says they need to have fins and scales. I've learned that there aren't any fish or any sea animals which have scales and yet no fins. So why is the qualifier "fins" necessary?*

Dear Miles Levin,

Your question is asked by the Talmud some 1500 years ago. (It's fascinating that our Sages knew this fact.)

Simply to identify kosher fish, it would have been enough for the Torah to simply write "scales," since every fish with scales also has fins. However when looking at these specifications as the *reason* for the fish being kosher, both are essential. Let me explain:

An elementary understanding behind all the laws of *kashrut* is the concept that the soul is influenced by whatever the body eats. The Talmud states that the kosher birds are the ones that are non-aggressive, so that we shouldn't absorb bad character traits by eating them. This can also explain the requirement for kosher animals having split hooves which are used for fleeing, as opposed to claws used for attacking. Chewing the cud is the compensation to allow these species to flee when necessary but still be able to maintain an appropriate intake of food in harsh environments. In a short stay upon a fertile feeding ground they are able to accumulate enough fodder to survive, and

they can flee at the appearance of an attacker and digest their food later.

The same applies to fish: the fins aid retreat while the scales act as a protective covering. Together, they are specifications which classify them as the hunted and not as the hunters.

Sources:

- Chullin 59a, 66b
- Niddah 51b
- Gaon of Vilna on "Sabei Devei Atuna"
- Ramban Leviticus 11:13

## TENDING THE BAR MITZVAH

**Judith Subar <ABubbe@aol.com> wrote:**

Dear Rabbi,

*Something bothered me recently when I attended an Orthodox Bar Mitzvah week-end. The Orthodox caterers were serving food during Shabbat. They seemed to be working very hard on the Shabbat. What is the halacha for preparing, serving, and cleaning up during Shabbat? Thank you!*

Dear Judith Subar,

On Shabbat, 39 categories of creative activities are forbidden by the Torah. These include such things as cooking, writing and building a fire. Other prohibitions were added by our Sages to safeguard the sanctity and spirit of Shabbat.

As long as the caterer avoids any of these forbidden activities, he is allowed to "work" on Shabbat. For example, all food must be cooked in advance and kept warm on a stove that was lit before Shabbat. He doesn't violate the spirit of Shabbat either, because his efforts are Shabbat related.

Another issue is the Rabbinic prohibition against earning wages on Shabbat. The Sages forbade earning wages for a Shabbat activity, even if the activity itself is permitted. They limited this prohibition, however, only to payment designated *specifically* for work done on Shabbat. But if the pay is part of a "package deal" which includes work done during the week, such as setting up before Shabbat and cleaning up after Shabbat, then even the Shabbat wages are permitted.

Sources:

- Shulchan Aruch 306:4
- Mishna Berurah 306:16
- Shemirat Shabbat Kehilchata 28:59

## THE RABBI'S CAR

(Name withheld) wrote,

Dear Rabbi,  
What do you think of a Rabbi, with a large number of survivors in his congregation, that buys a Mercedes Benz automobile?

Alex <kornale@charlie.iit.edu>  
Glenview, Illinois wrote:

Dear Rabbi,  
What is the halachic standing on buying German cars. I have tested

BMW and Mercedes, both are \$40,000 cars and I want to buy one. But then I was told that there is a halachic issue with buying those cars, because they are German.

Dear Alex and (Name Withheld),

Many people refrain from buying German products as a way of showing their moral outrage at the behavior of the German people during the Holocaust. Strictly speaking, however, there's no halachic basis for not buying German products.

But a person should always consider how his actions will affect others. For

example, a friend of mine would never buy a German car because his mother, a Holocaust survivor, would be deeply hurt and offended.

As for the Rabbi who bought the Mercedes, we can't judge a person without knowing all the circumstances, motives and pressures that the person experiences. Judaism tells us that "You shall not hate your fellow man in your heart," rather you should tell the other person what's bothering you about his behavior. I suggest that you speak directly to the rabbi in a respectful manner and clarify the issue with him.

New Feature!

## PUBLIC DOMAIN

Comments, quibbles and reactions concerning previous "Ask-the-Rabbi" features.

I would just like to add that the custom to pick up the Bride and Groom on chairs began in the late 1930's here in NY. My father and his friends made a wedding for one of the poorer boys in the yeshiva. It turned out to be one of the most beautiful and lively weddings that they ever attended. In the heat of the dancing, some of the boys lifted the groom and start-

ed dancing with him. Later the ladies did the same with the bride. The rest as they say is history.

David Rockove  
<drockove@juno.com>

I once heard another reason for the braids of the Challahs. Each challah has three braids, times four (twice Lechem Mishna) gives us 12. There were 12 Lechem Haponim on the Shulchan in the Mikdash.

Rabbi Asher Schechter from Fair Lawn, NJ  
<comp-acct.fiduciary.software@worldnet.att.net>

We usually put a small 3 braid on top of a larger 3 braid and bake them together, or we make a six-braided challa. When we use two loaves made in this way we actually have 12, representing the *lechem hapanim*.

Nancy Wells from Dallas, Texas <nwells@objs.com>

## YIDDLE RIDDLE

Last week we asked:

Of which two people in the Torah can it be said that their names spelled backwards are words used by the Torah to describe them?

**Answer:** Noach and Er, son of Judah. Concerning Noach the verse says "Noach found favor (*chein*) in Hashem's eyes." In Hebrew, *Chein* is *Noach* spelled backwards. Concerning Er the verse says "And Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil (*rah*) in Hashem's eyes. In Hebrew, *Rah* is *Er* spelled backwards.

• Bereishet 6:8, 38:7

continued from page three

## BONUS ANSWER!

Avram had soundly defeated the four kings. G-d saw no need to embolden Avram before his battle, so why should He do so now, after Avram was victorious? Therefore, Rashi explains that Avram's fear resulted from a new concern; namely, that his miraculous victory had somehow caused him a spiritual loss.

• Adapted from Dr. Avigdor Bonchek's new book "What's Bothering Rashi?" (Feldheim Publishers)

## RECOMMENDED READING LIST

**RAMBAN**  
12:6 A Sign for the Children  
12:8 Proclaiming the Name of Hashem  
12:10 The Sin of Avram

13:7 The Quarrel of the Shepherds  
14:1 The Four Kings  
15:12 The Dreadful Vision  
16:12 Yishmael

**SFORNO**  
12:17 Pharaoh's Plague  
16:12 Yishmael  
17:1 Attaining Perfection