

## פרשת חיי שרה

We all understand why plagiarism is unethical and dishonest. First, it if present the plagiarized material as my own and I receive money or gifts or something else tangible because of such material, I have taken property in an illicit manner.

And, even if I have not received any measureable benefit from using the copied material, the recognition that comes to me from such material is undeserved and I have misled others.

Even if intellectual property is not considered to be 'owned' by the one who devised, and such is a question in Halachah, we have been told that the honest citation of a source has a tremendous potential.

We read in B'raisa *Kinyan Torah* which completes the 5 chapters on Mishnayos in Masseches Ovos (6/7):

האומר דבר בשם אומרו מביא גאולה לעולם שנאמר (אסתר ב/כב<sup>1</sup>) ותאמר אסתר למלך בשם מרדכי:

One who says something in the name of the one who [originally] said it brings redemption to the world. This is as it says, 'Esther told the king in the name of Mordechai.

*Tiferes Yisroel* explains there:

מביא גאולה לעולם. שמי שעושה דבר טוב, הקדוש ברוך הוא חפץ שיתפרסם שם המטיב ודרכיו בעולם, וילמדו אחרים ממנו:

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<sup>1</sup> The entire verse reads:

וַיֵּדַע הַדָּבָר לְמָרְדֳּכַי וַיִּגְדַּל לְאַסְתֵּר הַמַּלְכָּה וַתֹּאמֶר אֶסְתֵּר לְמֶלֶךְ בְּשֵׁם מָרְדֳּכַי:

The matter became known to Mordechai and he told it to Queen Esther and Esther told it to the king in the name of Mordechai.

We remember that Mordechai overheard a plot to kill Achashveirosh and he told Esther in order to foil the plot and Esther delivered the information *בשם אומרו*, in the name of Mordechai.

When Mordechai finally received his reward from the king for providing this life-saving information, the downfall of Homon began and the salvation from the latter's plot was realized.

*He brings redemption to the world* – One who does something good, Hashem wishes to publicize the name of the do-gooder and his path in the world so that others will learn from him.

It is remarkable that this statement is not brought in the context of redemptive acts that are particularly focused on bringing the *Geulah*. Rather it is brought as the 48<sup>th</sup> way in which a person can acquire Torah.

That is, the Braisa is interested in telling us of the means necessary for acquiring Torah and honest quotations and citations are one of those means.

However, this particular means has a quality that goes beyond the Beis HaMidrash. It has a most positive effect upon the entire world and its history.

It seems that we read of plagiarism in this week's Parshas Chaye Sarah and it does not seem that there was a punitive response to the plagiarism. The contrary is true. Everything turned out very well.

As Rivka l'meinu was about to depart the house of Lovon, her brother, we read (B'reishis Perek 24/Posuk 60) what he and their mother said:

וַיְבָרְכוּ אֶת רַבֵּקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ אַחֹתֵנוּ אֵת הַיְי לְאַלְפֵי רַבָּבָה וַיִּירֶשׁ זְרַעָהּ אֶת שַׁעַר שְׂנְאָיו:

They blessed Rivka and they said to her, 'Our sister, may you become thousands of myriads and may your seed inherit the gate of those who hate it.'

Now if this blessing sounds familiar it is with good reason.

At the end of last week's Parshas Vayera, when the historical event of *Akeidas Yitzchak* comes to its conclusion, we read the angel's blessing to Avraham and Yitzchak (Perek 22/Posuk 17):

כִּי בָרַךְ אֲבָרְכְךָ וְהִרְבָּה אַרְבֵּה אֶת זְרַעְךָ כְּכּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכַחֵל אֲשֶׁר עַל שְׁפַת הַיָּם וַיִּרֶשׁ זְרַעָהּ אֶת שַׁעַר אֹיְבָיו:

I will certainly bless you and I will certainly increase your seed as the stars of heavens and as the sand on the seashore; your seed will inherit the gate of its enemies.

It is true that there is a small difference: the angel said 'enemies' and Lovon said 'haters'. But that is how plagiarizers work. They make some minor changes and say that all is original and not copied from anyone else.

However, not only did the failure to acknowledge the source of this blessing not distance those involved from redemption, their words were taken as a model for the relationship of the Jewish People to every bride who is married  
כדת משה וישראל.

As unlikely as it would seem, Chazal view the words uttered by Lovon as being worthy of emulation.

We read in the Braisa of Masseches Kallah Rabbosi (Perek 1/1):

מניין לברכת חתנים מן התורה, שנאמר ויברכו את רבקה ויאמר לה אחותינו את ה"י לאלפי רבבה ויירש זרעך את שער שנאיו.

From where do we know that the blessing made at a wedding is of Torah origin? It is as it says, 'They blessed Rivka and they said to her, 'Our sister, may you become thousands of myriads and may your seed inherit the gate of those who hate it.'

And if someone would think to suggest that a source from this *Masseches Ketana* is not authoritative, all they have to do is to see Tosfos to Masseches Kesuvos 7 b.

We read in the Gemara there:

תנא: מנין לברכת חתנים בעשרה? שנאמר: (רות ד/ב<sup>2</sup>) ויקח עשרה אנשים מזקני העיר ויאמר שבו פה.

The B'raisa taught: from where do we know that the blessings at a wedding require 10 men? It is as the verse writes: Boaz took ten men from the elders of the city and he said, 'sit here'.

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<sup>2</sup> The entire verse reads:

ויקח עשרה אנשים מזקני העיר ויאמר שבו פה וישבו:  
Boaz took ten men from the elders of the city and he said, 'sit here', and they sat.

Since this was to be an assembly when Boaz would marry Rus, he required a *minyan*.

Tosfos there (d.h. *she'ne'emar*) questions the Gemara's source from Rus since another verse has already been designated to teach the same lesson:

שנאמר ויקח בועז עשרה אנשים - ובמסכת כלה דמייתי קרא דויברכו את רבקה.  
איכא למימר דהתם ברכת אירוסין והכא ברכת נישואין

*It says that Boaz took ten men – But, in Masseches Kallah it brings the verse 'they blessed Rivka'?*

One can answer that there it is referring to *Birchos Eirusin* and here [in Masseches Kesuvos] it is referring to *Birchos Nisu'in*.

There are two sets of *B'rachos* that are recited at a wedding. The first set, ברכות אירוסין are recited for the actual marriage when he gives her the ring and says יהי-הרי את מקודשת לי you are sanctified to me as my wife.

The second set is ברכות נישואין when the *Chuppa* becomes their house and they begin their married life together.

Thus, Tosfos explains that the two sources are necessary and the words uttered by Lovon and his mother have an established place in the House of Israel<sup>3</sup>.

A similar, but not identical interpretation is found in Pirkei D'Rabi Eliezer (Perek 16). We read there:

וּכְחֻזְן שֶׁהוּא עוֹמֵד וּמְבָרֵךְ אֶת הַכֶּלֶה בְּחַפְתָּהּ, כִּן עָמְדוּ וּבִרְכוּ אֶת רַבְקָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר  
וּבִרְכוּ אֶת רַבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ וְגו'

When the *chazzan* stands and blesses the bride at her Chuppah – this is like that they stood and blessed Rivka, as it says, 'They blessed Rivka and they said to her, etc.

This is not the only surprise that comes from the mouths of Lovon and his parents.

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<sup>3</sup> In its continuation, Tosfos there posits that these blessings are not a true Torah obligation but, rather, the verse in Rus is an *אסמכתא*, an intimation of the need to recite these blessings.

When Eliezer *Eved Avraham* completes his recitation of the events that occurred, we read (ibid. Posuk 50):

וַיַּעַן לִבָּן וּבְתוֹאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵהָ יָצָא הַדָּבָר לֹא נוֹכַל דַּבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ רַע אוֹ טוֹב:

Lovon and Besuel answered and they said, 'This matter came out from G-d; we cannot speak to you either bad or good.'

The Name of Hashem is on the lips of these two evildoers?

How are we to understand these verses? In Haggadah Shel Pesach we read the interpretation of a verse in Parshas Ki Sovo. The verse (D'vorim Perek 26/Posuk 5) reads:

וְעֲנִיתָ וְאָמַרְתָּ לְפָנָי ה' אֶ...לִיקִיךָ אֲרָמִי אֲבֹד אָבִי וַיֵּרֵד מִצְרַיִם וַיִּגְר שָׁם בְּמֵתֵי מֶעֶט וַיְהִי שָׁם לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל עָצוּם וָרַב:

You shall answer and say before Hashem your G-d, 'The Aramean destroyed my father and he went down to Egypt and he sojourned there with a few people and he became a great and powerful and large people there.'

The Haggadah cites this verse to teach us that Lovon was worse than Par'o.

לבן בקש לעקור את הכל

Lovon sought to uproot everything.

Yet, this verse in our Parsha, too, is used as a source for a basic principle of our belief.

We read in Masseches Moed Koton (18 b):

אמר רב משום רבי ראובן בן אצטרובילי: מן התורה ומן הנביאים ומן הכתובים מה' אשה לאיש. מן התורה - דכתיב ויען לבן ובתואל ויאמרו מה' יצא הדבר...

Rav said in the name of Rabi Reuven ben Itz'trubili: From the Torah, from the Prophets and from Kesuvim we know that 'this specific woman is to be married to that specific man' comes from G-d.

From the Torah-it is written Lovon and Besuel answered and they said, 'This matter came out from G-d'.

How could anything said by Lovon be used as a model for Israel throughout our history?

However, despite the above, we find other sources that seem to mitigate the power and force of the 'example' that Lovon and family set for us.

Torah Shleima cites a manuscript from *Yalkut Ma'ayan Ganim* that writes:

וכי הם מאמינים בה? והלא הם עובד עבודה זרה ומנחשים! אלא אמרו 'כאשר דבר  
ה' בדעתכם אתם ואדוניכם אברהם'.

Did they believe in Hashem? Were they not idolaters and sorcerers? But, this is what they said, 'this is like Hashem said according to your opinion and that of your master Avraham.'

There was no declaration of belief in G-d whatsoever. They acknowledged that Eliezer and his entourage was only a mouthpiece for a certain religion that existed in another country, supported by Avraham.

In fact, if we see Rashi here we receive the same impression as from *Ma'ayan Ganim*. He writes:

ויען לבן ובתואל - רשע היה וקפץ להשיב לפני אביו:

*Lovon and Besuel answered* – Lovon was wicked so he jumped ahead to answer before his father could answer<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Lovon sent a very fine precedent for another person who was of his ilk – person who would live many centuries later.

We read in Megillas Esther (Perek 1/Posuk 16):

וַיֹּאמֶר מְמוּחָן לְפָנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְהַשָּׂרִים לֹא עַל הַמֶּלֶךְ לְבַדּוֹ עֹנְתָה וְשָׂתִי הַמַּלְכָּה כִּי עַל כָּל הַשָּׂרִים וְעַל כָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר בְּכָל מְדִינֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶחָשְׁוֶרוֹשׁ:

Memuchan said before the king and before the officers, 'Not only against the king alone did Queen Vashti sin; she sinned against all of the officers and all of the nations in all of the provinces of King Achashverosh.

This *Memuchan* was mentioned two verses earlier as we read:

וְהַקָּרֵב אֵלָיו כְּרֶשֶׁתָּא שְׁתֵּר אֲדַמְתָּא תְרִשִׁישׁ מְרִס מְרִסָּנָא מְמוּכָן שְׁבַעַת שְׂרִי פְרִס וּמְדִי רְאִי פְנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ  
הַיִּשְׁבִּים רְאִשְׁנָה בַּמְּלָכוֹת:

The ones who were close to the king were: Shesar, Admoso, Tarshish, Meres, Marsenoh and Memuchan; they are 'the Seven Officers' of Persia and Medea, they were 'Those Who see the King'; they sat in the first row of authority in the country.

לא נוכל דבר אליך - למאן בדבר הזה, לא על ידי תשובת דבר רע ולא על ידי תשובת דבר הגון לפי שניכר שמה' יצא הדבר, לפי דבריך שזימנה לך:

*We are unable to speak to you* – to refuse this matter – neither through negating this in a bad way or with a proper response because it is evident that this came from G-d, according to what you, Eliezer, said that you asked for this to be.

Are these two sources in opposition? Did the source that says that we learn from the Torah that a wife is chosen for her husband argue with the source that when Lovon said 'Hashem', he meant 'your god<sup>5</sup>, not mine'?

And we must acknowledge that even if we will come to a conclusion that there are difference of opinions in rabbinic sources regarding this issue, it is apparent that the Gemara is far more authoritative than the manuscript that has not yet been studied sufficiently.

We seem to find the same type of conflict regarding the blessing bestowed upon Rivka l'meinu.

We read in Midrash B'reishis Rabba (Parshata 60):

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Here, in the list of officers *Memuchan* is listed last, implying that he was of a lesser status than the other six.

But in the former verse, it is *Memuchan* who answers first. The Midrash *Lekach Tov* to this verse writes:

ויאמר ממוכן...אמר רבי אבא בר כהנא מכאן שהדיוט קופץ בראש.

*Memuchan said* – Rabi Abba bar Kahana said: from here we can learn that he is a commoner jumps ahead to be the first.

The Targum here identifies *Memuchan* with *Homon* and that, certainly, is why wickedness is attributed to him.

[See, however, Targum Sheini that identifies *Memuchan* with *Doniyel Ish Chamudos*. According to that Targum, *Doniyel* was proactive in removing *Vashti* from here reign as well as preparing the groundwork for the accession of *Esther* to the throne].

<sup>5</sup> According to the Midrash, *Hashem* was just another god in the panorama of many, many deities.

אחותנו את היי לאלפי רבבה. מפני מה לא נפקדה רבקה עד שהתפלל יצחק עליה  
שלא יהו אומות העולם אומרים תפלתנו עשתה פירות

*'Our sister, may you become thousands of myriads'* – why was it that Rivka did not become pregnant until Yitzchak prayed for her? The reason is so that the nations of the world would not say that 'it was our prayer that bore this fruit'.

It does seem paradoxical.

We trumpet this prayer. We say that it serves as a model that the Halachah emulated when *Anshei K'nesset HaGedolah* instituted the blessings at a wedding.

And, nowadays, when the father gives his daughter a blessing at the *b'deken*<sup>6</sup>, moments before she will stand at the Chuppa, he blesses her with these very words that came from Lovon HoRosho'!

The matter is no less complicated, and perhaps more so, when we learn the commentary of *Or HaChaim HaKodosh* regarding the blessing that Lovon and his mother bestowed upon Rivka l'meinu.

Let us attend to the precise language of the blessing once more. It reads:

וַיְבָרְכוּ אֶת רִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ אַחֲתֵנוּ אֵת הַיְי לְאַלְפֵי רַבְבָּה וַיִּירֶשׁ זְרַעֲךָ אֶת שַׁעַר שִׁנְאָיו:

They blessed Rivka and they said to her, 'Our sister, may you become thousands of myriads and may your seed inherit the gate of those who hate it.'

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<sup>6</sup> The *b'deken* is when the choson covers the face of the Kallah immediately before the wedding.

Some say that the word בדעק'ן is from the Yiddish word that means 'covering'.

Others say that the word *b'deken* comes from the Hebrew meaning 'to check' – לבדוק – and it refers to the Choson checking the identity of the bride before her face is covered with a thick veil that makes it impossible to identify her under the chuppah. So, in order to know whom he is marrying he checks who it is under the veil.

Many Poskim require that those who will witness the *kiddushin* identify the prospective bride before he is covered with a thick veil and to watch her until the wedding takes place so that they can testify with complete honesty that they know that this specific groom married this specific bride.



Now, since the word 'become' is *היי*, we can identify it as being second person, feminine. That is unquestionable. Since it is second person feminine in and of itself, the addition of the word *את* before the word *היי* seems to be superfluous. We know that 'you' is being addressed because of the word *היי*. What does *את* add to our understanding?

Or HaChaim writes:

את היי לאלפי רבבה וגו'. טעם אומרו את פירוש אחר שנתבשר אברהם שאלפי רבבה יצאו מיצחק יהי רצון שיצאו ממך.

*You will be thousands of myriads* – the reason why the verse has to write 'you'-*את* is that since Avraham was told that thousands of ten-thousands would emerge from Yitzchak, they said to Rivka 'May it be His will that they should come from you.'

The student of the Or HaChaim HaKodosh confronting this explanation for the first time may express some astonishment. His explanation seems to be exactly the same as that of Rashi.

Rashi writes:

את היי לאלפי רבבה - את זרעך תקבלו אותה ברכה שנאמר לאברהם בהר המוריה הרבה ארבה את זרעך וגו'. יהי רצון שיהא אותו הזרע ממך ולא מאשה אחרת:

*You should be for thousands of myriads* – You and your seed should receive the blessing that was said to Avraham on Mt. Moriah [at the *Akeida*] – [that Hashem said] 'I will certainly increase your seed etc.

They said to Rivka, 'May it be His will that that seed will come from you and not from another woman.

As *Sifsei Chachamim* writes here:

לכך נקט זרעך דהא הברכה ליצחק נתנה ולא לה...

Therefore they said to Rivka זרעך – *your* seed, since the blessing was given to Yitzchak, but not [necessarily] to Rivka<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Regarding the blessing given to Yitzchak at the *Akeida*, the angel said 'זרעך' –your seed, with זרעך being in the masculine. The focus was on Yitzchak, not on whomever he would marry

The blessing that was given to Yitzchak, they seemed to have said, should be fulfilled with you and only you.

When we compare Rashi's words with those that were written by Or HaChaim many centuries later, we are perplexed. What does *Or HaChaim HaKodosh* add to our understanding?

However, when we continue to read the rest of his commentary, we will have greater understanding.

Above we wrote 'they – Lovon and his family – "seemed" to have said'. That cautionary statement prepares us for what Or HaChaim teaches us anew.

He writes:

ויותר היה טוב להם שלא יהיה הדבר ולא יקום והבן כי כל חלק הרע ישנא חלק הטוב  
ולו יהיה בנו ובתו:

It would have been better for them that this matter – the blessing given to Yitzchak – would never be fulfilled.

This is because that which is evil hates that which is good – even when refer to a person's own son or daughter.

By the way that they expressed themselves, Or HaChaim HaKodosh is saying, we see that Lovon et. al. saw their blessing as a *b'di eved*.

They thought 'we truly hope that the angel's blessing will not be fulfilled and that the seed of Avraham will not be plentiful at all. We do not hope that he will have multitudes of offspring. We will be happy if he has none.

Were it to be *יהי רצון*, that Avraham would have killed Yitzchak on Mt. Moriah so that he would have no further generations whatsoever. We will get along much better with Yishmael and with Lot and those who come from them.

But, if it has to be that the blessings will be fulfilled, at least you, Rivka, should be their recipient.

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Thus, after further examination we are not required to attribute a sudden change of heart to Lovon and his family. We are justified in seeing their attribution of events to G-d as being far less than whole-hearted and in understanding that the blessings given even to their loved ones are limited and hesitant.

Thus, we are certainly in a quandary, if we are to interpret the sayings of Lovon and his family in a negative light, as certainly is to be expected<sup>8</sup>.

However, we do have a precedent of taking an utterance, which in and of itself was proper, of an evil person who meant it negatively and adopting it for our own usage.

It was Bil'am HoRosho' who said (B'midbar Perek 24/Posuk 5):

מַה טּוֹבוֹ אֹהֲלֶיהָ יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁכְּנֹתֶיהָ יִשְׂרָאֵל:

How goodly are your tents, Yaakov, your dwelling places, Israel.

Now, we know that the intent of Bil'am was nefarious. With these words Bil'am laid the groundwork for the sin with the Midianite women in which thousands of people died<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Of course, we are unable to say that even an evil person cannot have moments of good.

We read in Parshas Vayishlach (B'reishis Perek 33/Posuk 4):

וַיֵּרָץ עֵשָׂו לִקְרָאתוֹ וַיַּחְבְּקֵהוּ וַיִּפֹּל עַל צַוְאָרוֹ וַיִּשָּׁקֵהוּ וַיִּבְכוּ:

Eisav ran to meet Yaakov and he hugged him and he fell upon his neck and he kissed him and they cried.

Rashi writes:

ויחבקהו - נתגלגלו רחמיו כשראהו משתחוה כל השתחוואות הללו:

*He hugged him* – Eisav's mercy was aroused when he saw Yaakov bowing so many times before him.

וישקהו - ...יש דרשו שלא נשקו בכל לבו. אמר רבי שמעון בן יוחאי הלכה היא בידוע שעשו שונא ליעקב, אלא שנכמרו רחמיו באותה שעה ונשקו בכל לבו:

*He kissed him* – there are those who interpreted that Eisav did not kiss Yaakov with complete sincerity.

Rabi Shimon bar Yochai said: it is a clearly known fact and Halachah that Eisav hates Yaakov but at this particular time his mercy was aroused and at that moment he kissed Yaakov with complete sincerity.

<sup>9</sup> Rashi writes in Parshas Mattos (B'midbar Perek 31/Posuk 16):

Nonetheless, though his intent was wicked, the words that Bil'am spoke, out of the context in which they were said, were moving.

This is how Rashi explains:

מה טובו אהליך - על שראה פתחיהם שאינן מכוונין זה מול זה:

*How goodly are your tents* – Bil'am saw that the openings of each tent did not face the opening of other tents.

משכנותיך - ...דבר אחר מה טובו אהליך. מה טובו אהל שילה ובית עולמים בישובן שמקריבין בהן קרבנות לכפר עליהם:

*Your dwelling places* – another explanation is that 'how goodly are your tents' refers to the tent of the Mishkan in Shilo and the Beis HaMikdosh in Yerushalayim.

When they were standing they brought *korbonos* upon them to bring atonement for them.

משכנותיך - אף כשהן חרבין, לפי שהן משכון עליכם, וחורבן כפרה על הנפשות...

*Your dwelling places* – Even when they are destroyed they are good. They were a guarantee for your continuity. When they were destroyed they brought you atonement.

We can apply the same reasoning to the verses here.

When Lovon said מה' יצא הדבר he did not mean well. That is apparent from the entirety of the verse.

וַיַּעַן לְבֹן וּבְתוֹאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ יְמֵה' יֵצֵא הַדְּבָר לֹא נוֹכַל דַּבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ רַע אוֹ טוֹב:

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בדבר בלעם - אמר להם אפילו אתם מכניסים כל האומות שבעולם אין אתם יכולים להם, שמא מרובים אתם מן המצרים שהיו שש מאות רכב בחור. בואו ואשיאכם עצה. א...ל'קיהם של אלו שונא זמה הוא וכו', כדאיתא בחלק (סנהדרין קו א) ובספרי:

*By the word of Bil'am* – Bil'am said to the Moabites, 'Even if you gather all the nations of the world you will not be able to defeat them. Are you more populace than Egypt that had 600 chosen chariots?

Come and I will give you advice. Their G-d hates promiscuity, etc.'  
As we read in Masseches Sanhedrin.

Lovon and Besuel answered and they said, 'This matter came out from G-d; we cannot speak to you either bad or good.'

If the matter came from G-d, what does it mean that 'we cannot speak to you either bad or good'?

If you truly believe it came from G-d and you truly believe in G-d, you are happy to fulfill His Word. Certainly you would not speak 'bad'!

And thus Rashi says,

לא נוכל דבר אליך - למאן בדבר הזה...

*We are unable to speak with you – to prevent this from happening.*

It is in this very light that we are able to understand the words that Hashem told Lovon decades later when the latter wished to punish Yaakov for fleeing from him.

We read in Parshas Vayetze (Perek 31/Posuk 24):

וַיָּבֹא אֵלָיו... לְלִיקִים אֶל לֵבן הָאֲרָמִי בְחֹלֶם הַלַּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הַשְּׁמֵר לְךָ פֶּן תִּדְבֹּר עִם יַעֲקֹב מִטוֹב עַד רָע:

G-d came to Lovon the Aramean in a dream at night and He said to him, 'Be careful lest you speak to Yaakov from good to bad.'

Now we understand why Hashem would tell Lovon not to speak badly to Lovon. But why would He tell him not to speak good?

The answer is that Lovon's relating G-d's speech would always be with regret that he had no power to overturn the word of G-d – just as we see in our Parsha.

If he had the power, Lovon would have certainly undermined the entire event and prevented it from occurring.

But despite all the negativity and opposition that Lovon felt, the words themselves that he spoke, when we take them out of their context, have meaning in a positive way. Our sages understood that the Torah wrote these words so that we could conscript them for our own use.

This is reminiscent of what we read regarding what the brothers of Yosef said at the time of the sale and what the Torah reveals to us as the comment of Hashem.

We read in Parshas Vayeshev (B'reishis Perek 37/Posuk 20):

וְעַתָּה לְכוּ וְנַהַרְגֵהוּ וְנִשְׁלַכֵהוּ בְּאֶחָד הַבְּרוֹת וְאָמַרְנוּ חַיָּה רָעָה אֲכָלְתָהוּ וְנִרְאָה מִה יִהְיֶה חֲלֹמֹתָיו:

Now, let us kill him and cast him into one of the pits and we will say, 'a wild beast devoured him'; and we will see what will be of his dreams.

Rashi writes:

ונראה מה יהיו חלומותיו - אמר רבי יצחק מקרא זה אומר דרשני, רוח הקודש אומרת כן. הם אומרים נהרגהו, והכתוב מסיים ונראה מה יהיו חלומותיו, נראה דבר מי יקום או שלכם או שלי.

*We will see what will be of his dreams* – Rabi Yitzchak said, 'This verse requires interpretation. *Ruach HaKodesh* says this phrase.

The brothers said, 'We will kill him' and the verse concludes 'we will see what will be of his dreams'.

Ruach HaKodesh said, 'We will see whose words will be triumphant – yours or Mine.'

Yaakov, who will be eventually called 'Yisroel', has been destined by HaKodosh Boruch Hu to be the third and final patriarch who will establish the People of Israel for all generations.

Lovon wished to be the foil and to destroy the budding people in its infancy. Lovon wanted to destroy Israel.

He spoke a great deal and expressed, subtly, how he wished to prevent Israel from reaching its divine destiny.

Our Chachamim took his words and diverted them from his intentions to be an expression of G-d's intentions, the expression of Ruach HaKodesh that says, 'we will see what will become of his plans.'

When we take these words of Lovon HoRosho' and we use them for our own purpose, we are making it very clear:

This is what you thought you could do to prevent the Word of G-d from succeeding. When we use your very statements as part of our Torah life we are proclaiming for ourselves and for others:

עֲצַת ה' לְעוֹלָם תִּעֲמַד מִחֲשָׁבוֹת לִבּוֹ לְדֹר וָדֹר<sup>10</sup>:

It is the counsel of G-d that will stand forever; the thoughts of His heart are from generation to generation.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Pollock

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<sup>10</sup> Tehillim Perek 33/Posuk 11.