



# דרכים בפרשה

ויחי



**ויקרא יעקב אל בניו ויאמר האספו ואגידה לכם**

***And Yaakov called his sons and said, Gather around and I will tell you what will occur to you in the end of days***

The gemara in Pesachim 56a tells us what transpired at the moment that Yaakov wished to bless his sons: ויקרא: דאמר רבי שמעון בן לקיש: יעקב אל בניו ויאמר האספו ואגידה לכם". ביקש יעקב לגלות לבניו קץ הימין, ונסתלקה ממנו שכינה. אמר: שמא חס ושלום יש במטתי פסול, כאברהם שיצא ממנו ישמעאל, ואבי יצחק שיצא ממנו עשו? אמרו לו בניו: "שמע ישראל, ה' אלקינו ה' אחד". אמרו: כשם שאין בלבך אלא אחד, כך אין בלבנו אלא אחד. באותה שעה פתח יעקב אבינו ואמר: "ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד". *As R'Shimon ben Lakish said that it is written: "And Yaakov called his sons and said, Gather around and I will tell you what will occur to you in the end of days". Yaakov wanted to reveal to his sons when the complete redemption would arrive at the end of days (see Daniel 12:13), but the Shechina abandoned him, rendering him unable to give his nevuah. He said: Perhaps the Shechina has abandoned me because, Chas v'Shalom, one of my descendants is unfit, as was the case with my grandfather Avraham, from whom Yishmael emerged, and like my father Yitzchak, from whom Eisav emerged. His sons said to him: Hear Yisrael, our father, the Hashem is our God, Hashem is One. They said: Just as there is only one God in your heart, so too, there is only one in our hearts. At that moment Yaakov Avinu said in praise: Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever, as all his children were righteous.*

As Rashi to our possuk explains, Yaakov wanted to reveal to his children when Mashiach would come. Therefore, according

to the Shelah, he told his children to assemble, since it is impossible for the Redemption to come if there is hatred among Jews; they all must be in one group, one assembly.

The *sefarim* comment on what seems to be Yaakov repeating himself in different words, as first Yaakov told his children to assemble, and then in the next possuk, he said to gather, הקבצו. The Malbim explains that "kibbutz" and "asifah" are not synonymous. Kibbutz is the specific term for gathering together, while asifa is a later stage, and it means bringing into a designated place. If these words are to be used together, kibbutz must come first, followed by asifa. First the disparate parts are brought together from their various locations, and only afterward are they brought into a specific place.

Yet here, Yaakov first tells his sons האספו and afterwards הקבצו. Yaakov's original intentions were to tell his sons about a time long in the future, to reveal to them the time of the Final Redemption. To this end, Yaakov commanded his sons to band together as a unified "asifah" – a level of spiritual unity which follows, and is higher than, physical "kibbutz" – and to thereby prepare themselves for Geulah, the Final Redemption. This alludes to the statement of Chazal that the Beis HaMikdash was destroyed due to the sin of baseless hatred, from which it follows that its rebuilding must depend on the unity of Klal Yisroel. "If you can reach such a state, then I will relate to you what will happen to you at the end of the days." However, when

Yaakov sensed that the Shechina had departed from him, he understood this as an indication that the Jewish people would eventually be torn with machlokes and internal strife, thus making it impossible for him now to reveal the time of the Final Redemption. Therefore, Yaakov changed course, telling his sons instead, "hi'kavtzu," to simply assemble "and listen to your father" speak of other matters.

Similarly, the Chidushei HaRim explains that at first Yaakov wanted to reveal when the End of Days would come. So he called out, "האספו." But then, "ונסתלקה ממנו שכינה" - but the Shechinah departed from him." Therefore, he was no longer able to reveal when Mashiach would come, so he began to say other things. However, although he was prevented from revealing when it would come, Yaakov was able to reveal a suggestion how to bring about the Geulah. Hence, he called out once more, "הקבצו," for when Jews are unified, that will speed up the Final Redemption.

On the possuk. ויהי בישרון מלך בהתאסף ראשי עם (Devarim 33:5). *Then Hashem became King in Yeshurun when the heads of the people assembled, the shevatim of Yisroel together.* Rashi comments: **בהתאסף.** בהתאספם יחד באגדה אחת ושלוש ביניהם, הוא מלכם, ולא כשיש מחלקת ביניהם (ספרי) When will we merit Hashem as our King? Only when we are gathered into one unit, and there is peace among us - not when there is strife.

The sefer Mishchas Shemen quotes from the sifrei Kabbalah that explain the words we say in Minchah of Shabbos, אתה אחד ושםך אחד ומי - כעמך ישראל גוי אחד בארץ - You are One and Your Name is One; and who is like Your people Yisrael, one nation earth." According to this explanation, we are saying to Hashem: You, are One, and Your Name is One, but that

is revealed only when your nation is united, when they are a *goy echad*.

There is a well-known sarcastic *vertel* that explains the words of the famous song, which we actually say in davening as follows: אחינו כל בית ישראל הנתונים בצרה ובשביה העומדים בין בים וביבשה - When is it that all of Klal Yisroel are brothers? When, *nebach*, there are terrible *tzurus* happening. Or perhaps, when one is "out of town" and they meet someone that never says a word to them while at home, but suddenly in this out of town setting it is as if they are best friends. So we ask Hashem, המקום ירחם עליהם ויוציאם מצרה לרוחה - Please make it that the friendships aren't only in times of strife and dark times, but even in good, "light" times, because this will take us from the shibbud to the geula.

Perhaps we can add one more thought: At first Yaakov called together his sons with the term האספו which connotes a gathering of those who are nearby. This gathering was meant to be one of *tzaddikim*. Yaakov thought that a gathering of *tzaddikim* would be sufficient to bring an end to the *galus*. But when the *Shechina* left him, he realized that more was needed: one must make sure to include even those who are distant from Hashem. Therefore he added הקבצו referring to those who are distant from Hashem.

If we truly want this *galus* to finally end, it can only come about when there is a true *achdus* amongst all of Klal Yisroel. All of Klal Yisroel includes all of the *shevatim* even though they are not the same. Furthermore, it also includes the regular Yossel and Duvid on the street, and not just the *tzadikim*.

**Good Shabbos, מרדכי אפפלי**

