

**Sefer Chavakuk: Adina Blaustein**

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| [**Zohar, Beshalach 1:20**](https://www.sefaria.org/Zohar,_Beshalach.1.20)  Now this child became the prophet Chavakuk. The duplicate form of his name (Chavkukuk instead of *Chabuk=embraced*) suggests that he owed his life to two “embracings”: one of his mother (cf. 5, 16), and one of Elisha, one coming from the sphere to which he was attached at first, and the other from the higher supernal grade. | [**ספר הזהר, בשלח א׳:כ׳**](https://www.sefaria.org/Zohar,_Beshalach.1.20)  וְדָא הוּא חֲבַקּוּק נְבִיאָה, כְּמָה דְּאַתְּ אָמֵר אַתְּ חוֹבֶקֶת בֵּן. אִי הָכִי חָבוּק מִבָּעֵי לֵיהּ, אֲמַאי חֲבַקּוּק תְּרֵי. אֶלָּא, חַד דְּאִמֵּיהּ, וְחַד דְּאֱלִישָׁע, דְּאִתְחַבָּק עִמֵּיהּ. דָּבָר אַחֵר תְּרֵי חִבּוּקִין הֲווֹ בֵּיהּ, בֵּין לְהַאי סִטְרָא בֵּין לְהַאי סִטְרָא. חִבּוּקָא חֲדָא, הַהוּא אֲתָר דְּהֲוָה תָּלֵי בֵּיהּ בְּקַדְמִיתָא. חִבּוּקָא אַחֲרִינָא דְּסָלִיק לֵיהּ לְדַרְגִּין עִלָּאִין יַתִּיר, וּבְגִין כָּךְ חֲבַקּוּק תְּרֵי. |



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| [**II Kings 4**](https://www.sefaria.org/II_Kings.4)  (8) One day Elisha visited Shunem. A wealthy woman lived there, and she urged him to have a meal; and whenever he passed by, he would stop there for a meal. (9) Once she said to her husband, “I am sure it is a holy agent of God who comes this way regularly. (10) Let us make a small enclosed upper chamber and place a bed, a table, a chair, and a lampstand there for him, so that he can stop there whenever he comes to us.” (11) One day he came there; he retired to the upper chamber and lay down there. (12) He said to his servant Gehazi, “Call that Shunammite.” He called her, and she stood before him. (13) He said to him, “Tell her, ‘You have gone to all this trouble for us. What can we do for you? Can we speak in your behalf to the king or to the army commander?’” She replied, “I live among my own people.” (14) “What then can be done for her?” he asked. “The fact is,” said Gehazi, “she has no son, and her husband is old.” (15) “Call her,” he said. He called her, and she stood in the doorway. (16) And Elisha said, “At this season next year, you will be embracing a son.” She replied, “Please, my lord, agent of God, do not delude your maidservant.” (17) The woman conceived and bore a son at the same season the following year, as Elisha had assured her. (18) The child grew up. One day, he went out to his father among the reapers. (19) [Suddenly] he cried to his father, “Oh, my head, my head!” He said to a servant, “Carry him to his mother.” (20) He picked him up and brought him to his mother. And the child sat on her lap until noon; and he died. (21) She took him up and laid him on the bed of the agent of God, and left him and closed the door. (22) Then she called to her husband: “Please, send me one of the servants and one of the jennies, so I can hurry to the agent of God and back.” (23) But he said, “Why are you going to him today? It is neither new moon nor sabbath.” She answered, “It’s all right.”(24) She had the jenny saddled, and said to her servant, “Urge it on;see that I don’t slow down unless I tell you.” (25) She went on until she came to the agent of God on Mount Carmel. When the agent of God saw her from afar, he said to his servant Gehazi, “There is that Shunammite. (26) Go, hurry toward her and ask her, ‘How are you? How is your husband? How is the child?’” “We are well,” she replied. (27) But when she came up to the agent of God on the mountain, she clasped his feet. Gehazi stepped forward to push her away; but the agent of God said, “Let her alone, for she is in bitter distress; and GOD has hidden it from me and has not told me.” (28) Then she said, “Did I ask my lord for a son? Didn’t I say: ‘Don’t mislead me’?” (29) He said to Gehazi, “Tie up your skirts, take my staff in your hand, and go. If you meet anyone, do not greet him; and if anyone greets you, do not answer him. And place my staff on the face of the boy.” (30) But the boy’s mother said, “As GOD lives and as you live, I will not leave you!” So he arose and followed her. (31) Gehazi had gone on before them and had placed the staff on the boy’s face; but there was no sound or response. He turned back to meet him and told him, “The boy has not awakened.” (32) Elisha came into the house, and there was the boy, laid out dead on his couch. (33) He went in, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to GOD. (34) Then he mounted [the bed] and placed himself over the child. He put his mouth on its mouth, his eyes on its eyes, and his hands on its hands, as he bent over it. And the body of the child became warm. (35) He stepped down, walked once up and down the room, then mounted and bent over him. Thereupon, the boy sneezed seven times, and the boy opened his eyes. (36) [Elisha] called Gehazi and said, “Call the Shunammite,” and he called her. When she came to him, he said, “Pick up your son.” (37) She came and fell at his feet and bowed low to the ground; then she picked up her son and left. | [**מלכים ב ד׳**](https://www.sefaria.org/II_Kings.4)  (ח) וַיְהִ֨י הַיּ֜וֹם וַיַּֽעֲבֹ֧ר אֱלִישָׁ֣ע אֶל־שׁוּנֵ֗ם וְשָׁם֙ אִשָּׁ֣ה גְדוֹלָ֔ה וַתַּחֲזֶק־בּ֖וֹ לֶאֱכׇל־לָ֑חֶם וַֽיְהִי֙ מִדֵּ֣י עׇבְר֔וֹ יָסֻ֥ר שָׁ֖מָּה לֶאֱכׇל־לָֽחֶם׃ (ט) וַתֹּ֙אמֶר֙ אֶל־אִישָׁ֔הּ הִנֵּה־נָ֣א יָדַ֔עְתִּי כִּ֛י אִ֥ישׁ אֱלֹהִ֖ים קָד֣וֹשׁ ה֑וּא עֹבֵ֥ר עָלֵ֖ינוּ תָּמִֽיד׃ (י) נַעֲשֶׂה־נָּ֤א עֲלִיַּת־קִיר֙ קְטַנָּ֔ה וְנָשִׂ֨ים ל֥וֹ שָׁ֛ם מִטָּ֥ה וְשֻׁלְחָ֖ן וְכִסֵּ֣א וּמְנוֹרָ֑ה וְהָיָ֛ה בְּבֹא֥וֹ אֵלֵ֖ינוּ יָס֥וּר שָֽׁמָּה׃ (יא) וַיְהִ֥י הַיּ֖וֹם וַיָּ֣בֹא שָׁ֑מָּה וַיָּ֥סַר אֶל־הָעֲלִיָּ֖ה וַיִּשְׁכַּב־שָֽׁמָּה׃ (יב) וַיֹּ֙אמֶר֙ אֶל־גֵּיחֲזִ֣י נַעֲר֔וֹ קְרָ֖א לַשּׁוּנַמִּ֣ית הַזֹּ֑את וַיִּ֨קְרָא־לָ֔הּ וַֽתַּעֲמֹ֖ד לְפָנָֽיו׃ (יג) וַיֹּ֣אמֶר ל֗וֹ אֱמׇר־נָ֣א אֵלֶ֘יהָ֮ הִנֵּ֣ה חָרַ֣דְתְּ ׀ אֵלֵ֘ינוּ֮ אֶת־כׇּל־הַחֲרָדָ֣ה הַזֹּאת֒ מֶ֚ה לַעֲשׂ֣וֹת לָ֔ךְ הֲיֵ֤שׁ לְדַבֶּר־לָךְ֙ אֶל־הַמֶּ֔לֶךְ א֖וֹ אֶל־שַׂ֣ר הַצָּבָ֑א וַתֹּ֕אמֶר בְּת֥וֹךְ עַמִּ֖י אָנֹכִ֥י יֹשָֽׁבֶת׃ (יד) וַיֹּ֕אמֶר וּמֶ֖ה לַעֲשׂ֣וֹת לָ֑הּ וַיֹּ֣אמֶר גֵּיחֲזִ֗י אֲבָ֛ל בֵּ֥ן אֵֽין־לָ֖הּ וְאִישָׁ֥הּ זָקֵֽן׃ (טו) וַיֹּ֖אמֶר קְרָא־לָ֑הּ וַיִּ֨קְרָא־לָ֔הּ וַֽתַּעֲמֹ֖ד בַּפָּֽתַח׃ (טז) וַיֹּ֗אמֶר לַמּוֹעֵ֤ד הַזֶּה֙ כָּעֵ֣ת חַיָּ֔ה (אתי) [אַ֖תְּ] חֹבֶ֣קֶת בֵּ֑ן וַתֹּ֗אמֶר אַל־אֲדֹנִי֙ אִ֣ישׁ הָאֱלֹהִ֔ים אַל־תְּכַזֵּ֖ב בְּשִׁפְחָתֶֽךָ׃ (יז) וַתַּ֥הַר הָאִשָּׁ֖ה וַתֵּ֣לֶד בֵּ֑ן לַמּוֹעֵ֤ד הַזֶּה֙ כָּעֵ֣ת חַיָּ֔ה אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּ֥ר אֵלֶ֖יהָ אֱלִישָֽׁע׃ (יח) וַיִּגְדַּ֖ל הַיָּ֑לֶד וַיְהִ֣י הַיּ֔וֹם וַיֵּצֵ֥א אֶל־אָבִ֖יו אֶל־הַקֹּצְרִֽים׃ (יט) וַיֹּ֥אמֶר אֶל־אָבִ֖יו רֹאשִׁ֣י ׀ רֹאשִׁ֑י וַיֹּ֙אמֶר֙ אֶל־הַנַּ֔עַר שָׂאֵ֖הוּ אֶל־אִמּֽוֹ׃ (כ) וַיִּ֨שָּׂאֵ֔הוּ וַיְבִיאֵ֖הוּ אֶל־אִמּ֑וֹ וַיֵּ֧שֶׁב עַל־בִּרְכֶּ֛יהָ עַד־הַֽצׇּהֳרַ֖יִם וַיָּמֹֽת׃ (כא) וַתַּ֙עַל֙ וַתַּשְׁכִּבֵ֔הוּ עַל־מִטַּ֖ת אִ֣ישׁ הָאֱלֹהִ֑ים וַתִּסְגֹּ֥ר בַּעֲד֖וֹ וַתֵּצֵֽא׃ (כב) וַתִּקְרָא֮ אֶל־אִישָׁהּ֒ וַתֹּ֗אמֶר שִׁלְחָ֨ה נָ֥א לִי֙ אֶחָ֣ד מִן־הַנְּעָרִ֔ים וְאַחַ֖ת הָאֲתֹנ֑וֹת וְאָר֛וּצָה עַד־אִ֥ישׁ הָאֱלֹהִ֖ים וְאָשֽׁוּבָה׃ (כג) וַיֹּ֗אמֶר מַ֠דּ֠וּעַ (אתי) [אַ֣תְּ] (הלכתי) [הֹלֶ֤כֶת] אֵלָיו֙ הַיּ֔וֹם לֹא־חֹ֖דֶשׁ וְלֹ֣א שַׁבָּ֑ת וַתֹּ֖אמֶר שָׁלֽוֹם׃ (כד) וַֽתַּחֲבֹשׁ֙ הָאָת֔וֹן וַתֹּ֥אמֶר אֶֽל־נַעֲרָ֖הּ נְהַ֣ג וָלֵ֑ךְ אַל־תַּעֲצׇר־לִ֣י לִרְכֹּ֔ב כִּ֖י אִם־אָמַ֥רְתִּי לָֽךְ׃ (כה) וַתֵּ֗לֶךְ וַתָּבֹ֛א אֶל־אִ֥ישׁ הָאֱלֹהִ֖ים אֶל־הַ֣ר הַכַּרְמֶ֑ל וַ֠יְהִ֠י כִּרְא֨וֹת אִישׁ־הָאֱלֹהִ֤ים אֹתָהּ֙ מִנֶּ֔גֶד וַיֹּ֙אמֶר֙ אֶל־גֵּיחֲזִ֣י נַעֲר֔וֹ הִנֵּ֖ה הַשּׁוּנַמִּ֥ית הַלָּֽז׃ (כו) עַתָּה֮ רֽוּץ־נָ֣א לִקְרָאתָהּ֒ וֶאֱמׇר־לָ֗הּ הֲשָׁל֥וֹם לָ֛ךְ הֲשָׁל֥וֹם לְאִישֵׁ֖ךְ הֲשָׁל֣וֹם לַיָּ֑לֶד וַתֹּ֖אמֶר שָׁלֽוֹם׃ (כז) וַתָּבֹ֞א אֶל־אִ֤ישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים֙ אֶל־הָהָ֔ר וַֽתַּחֲזֵ֖ק בְּרַגְלָ֑יו וַיִּגַּ֨שׁ גֵּיחֲזִ֜י לְהׇדְפָ֗הּ וַיֹּ֩אמֶר֩ אִ֨ישׁ הָאֱלֹהִ֤ים הַרְפֵּה־לָהּ֙ כִּֽי־נַפְשָׁ֣הּ מָֽרָה־לָ֔הּ וַֽיהֹוָה֙ הֶעְלִ֣ים מִמֶּ֔נִּי וְלֹ֥א הִגִּ֖יד לִֽי׃ (כח) וַתֹּ֕אמֶר הֲשָׁאַ֥לְתִּי בֵ֖ן מֵאֵ֣ת אֲדֹנִ֑י הֲלֹ֣א אָמַ֔רְתִּי לֹ֥א תַשְׁלֶ֖ה אֹתִֽי׃ (כט) וַיֹּ֨אמֶר לְגֵיחֲזִ֜י חֲגֹ֣ר מׇתְנֶ֗יךָ וְקַ֨ח מִשְׁעַנְתִּ֣י בְיָדְךָ֮ וָלֵךְ֒ כִּי־תִמְצָ֥א אִישׁ֙ לֹ֣א תְבָרְכֶ֔נּוּ וְכִֽי־יְבָרֶכְךָ֥ אִ֖ישׁ לֹ֣א תַעֲנֶ֑נּוּ וְשַׂמְתָּ֥ מִשְׁעַנְתִּ֖י עַל־פְּנֵ֥י הַנָּֽעַר׃ (ל) וַתֹּ֙אמֶר֙ אֵ֣ם הַנַּ֔עַר חַי־יְהֹוָ֥ה וְחֵֽי־נַפְשְׁךָ֖ אִם־אֶעֶזְבֶ֑ךָּ וַיָּ֖קׇם וַיֵּ֥לֶךְ אַחֲרֶֽיהָ׃ (לא) וְגֵחֲזִ֞י עָבַ֣ר לִפְנֵיהֶ֗ם וַיָּ֤שֶׂם אֶת־הַמִּשְׁעֶ֙נֶת֙ עַל־פְּנֵ֣י הַנַּ֔עַר וְאֵ֥ין ק֖וֹל וְאֵ֣ין קָ֑שֶׁב וַיָּ֤שׇׁב לִקְרָאתוֹ֙ וַיַּגֶּד־ל֣וֹ לֵאמֹ֔ר לֹ֥א הֵקִ֖יץ הַנָּֽעַר׃ (לב) וַיָּבֹ֥א אֱלִישָׁ֖ע הַבָּ֑יְתָה וְהִנֵּ֤ה הַנַּ֙עַר֙ מֵ֔ת מֻשְׁכָּ֖ב עַל־מִטָּתֽוֹ׃ (לג) וַיָּבֹ֕א וַיִּסְגֹּ֥ר הַדֶּ֖לֶת בְּעַ֣ד שְׁנֵיהֶ֑ם וַיִּתְפַּלֵּ֖ל אֶל־יְהֹוָֽה׃ (לד) וַיַּ֜עַל וַיִּשְׁכַּ֣ב עַל־הַיֶּ֗לֶד וַיָּ֩שֶׂם֩ פִּ֨יו עַל־פִּ֜יו וְעֵינָ֤יו עַל־עֵינָיו֙ וְכַפָּ֣יו עַל־כַּפָּ֔ו וַיִּגְהַ֖ר עָלָ֑יו וַיָּ֖חׇם בְּשַׂ֥ר הַיָּֽלֶד׃ (לה) וַיָּ֜שׇׁב וַיֵּ֣לֶךְ בַּבַּ֗יִת אַחַ֥ת הֵ֙נָּה֙ וְאַחַ֣ת הֵ֔נָּה וַיַּ֖עַל וַיִּגְהַ֣ר עָלָ֑יו וַיְזוֹרֵ֤ר הַנַּ֙עַר֙ עַד־שֶׁ֣בַע פְּעָמִ֔ים וַיִּפְקַ֥ח הַנַּ֖עַר אֶת־עֵינָֽיו׃ (לו) וַיִּקְרָ֣א אֶל־גֵּיחֲזִ֗י וַיֹּ֙אמֶר֙ קְרָא֙ אֶל־הַשֻּׁנַמִּ֣ית הַזֹּ֔את וַיִּקְרָאֶ֖הָ וַתָּבֹ֣א אֵלָ֑יו וַיֹּ֖אמֶר שְׂאִ֥י בְנֵֽךְ׃ (לז) וַתָּבֹא֙ וַתִּפֹּ֣ל עַל־רַגְלָ֔יו וַתִּשְׁתַּ֖חוּ אָ֑רְצָה וַתִּשָּׂ֥א אֶת־בְּנָ֖הּ וַתֵּצֵֽא׃ {פ}  (לח) וֶאֱלִישָׁ֞ע שָׁ֤ב הַגִּלְגָּ֙לָה֙ וְהָרָעָ֣ב בָּאָ֔רֶץ וּבְנֵי֙ הַנְּבִיאִ֔ים יֹשְׁבִ֖ים לְפָנָ֑יו וַיֹּ֣אמֶר לְנַעֲר֗וֹ שְׁפֹת֙ הַסִּ֣יר הַגְּדוֹלָ֔ה וּבַשֵּׁ֥ל נָזִ֖יד לִבְנֵ֥י הַנְּבִיאִֽים׃ |

**Discussion Questions**

1. The child in 2 Kings 4 is both a miraculous blessing and a test of faith. The Zohar identifies this child with Chavakkuk, whose name means “embrace,” perhaps symbolizing comfort or reconciliation.

* How might the identification of the child with Chavakkuk influence the way we understand his role in both stories? What symbolic meaning might a child’s life and death carry in the broader themes of these texts?

1. In Chavakkuk, the prophet grapples with why God allows the wicked to prosper and the righteous to suffer. In 2 Kings 4, the Shunamite’s personal loss seems unjust given her earlier kindness to Elisha.

* How do these texts wrestle with the problem of justice? What answers (if any) do they provide to the suffering of the righteous?

1. In 2 Kings 4, the Shunamite’s son miraculously comes back to life. Chavakkuk begins his prophecy lamenting violence and destruction (Chavakkuk 1:2-4). What role does God play in each narrative, and how do the characters respond to divine intervention (or lack thereof)?
2. Both texts feature moments of despair and eventual hope. The Shunamite woman persists until Elisha restores her son, and Chavakkuk shifts from lament to a hopeful conclusion in Chapter 3.

* How do these texts portray human resilience in the face of suffering? How do their messages of hope differ, and what might they teach us about responding to personal vs. national crises?

1. The story of the Isha Shunamite is read as the haftarah for Parshat Vayeira (Akeidat Yitzchak). In what way does the Akeida also wrestle with the themes of divine justice?

\*If you're interested in exploring this connection further, email me at adinablaustein@gmail.com and I'll share an excerpt from my forthcoming book on haftarot, exploring the connections between the Isha Shunamite and the story of Akeidat Yitzchak.