כולל משכימים
...וייראוך עם שמש מבקשי פניך...
גליון מבקשי פניך

What They Wanted to Use to Break the Shidduch Was Eliezer's Greatest Ma'alah

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On the words **ועפרון ישב בתוך בני חת**, Rashi points out that **ישב** is written chaser, without a vav, and explains:

ועפרון ישב. כתיב חסר, אותו היום מנוהו שוטר עליהם; מפני חשיבותו של אברהם שהיה צריך לו, עלה לגדלה:

That very day they appointed Efron a shoter over them.

A shoter usually means the shoter of shoftim veshotrim, the one who enforces the law. But the lashon of the Midrash Rabbah, where Rashi's words come from, shows that it means more than that. The Be'er Sheva in Sotah already says so: it is a minui of serarah, a position of rule.

ובעל כרחך צריך לפרש האי שוטר שר ומושל כדאיתא בהדיא בב"ר

Either way, why did they appoint him? **מפני חשיבותו של אברהם**. Avraham needed him, and it did not befit Avraham to have to deal with a plain, ordinary person. As the mefarshim learn Rashi, it was arranged min haShamayim that on that day of all days, Efron was appointed.

Picture what went on. Most likely they held some sort of election. Everyone came in and said, "Efron won!" Why was Efron so successful? One person gives this reason and another gives that reason. This is what he did, this was his platform.

Comes the Torah and says: all shtusim. None of it has any shaychus. Why did Efron win? Whatever Efron was, they appointed him for one reason only: Avraham Avinu. Avraham Avinu wanted to buy the Me'aras Hamachpeilah.

It may be even more than that. The Pardes Yosef asks: Avraham wanted to buy the Me'aras Hamachpeilah from Efron. But every person has bechirah. Efron could decide he does not want to sell. What will be then?

So, says the Pardes Yosef, Hakadosh Baruch Hu arranged that Efron be appointed a shoter. Once he is a shoter, the heart of kings and officers is in the hand of Hashem. He no longer has bechirah. And once he has no bechirah, it is certain that Avraham Avinu will be able to buy the Me'aras Hamachpeilah.

In any event, you think it is this reason or that reason. The Torah is megaleh the emesdike reason: Hakadosh Baruch Hu wanted Avraham to be able to buy the Me'aras Hamachpeilah.

Now picture what sort of person Efron was. It is explicit in the pesukim that he was not a morally upstanding man. He tried to trick Avraham. Avraham asked only for the cave at the edge of his field. Efron answered: "No, that won't do. You want me to sell the cave without the field?" Avraham did not need the field. What did he need a field for?

Then Efron spoke of giving it as a matanah. Avraham had already understood that Efron wanted nothing of the sort. He wanted money, and plenty of it.

The pshat is that Efron was not made a sar for some fine reason. He was appointed only because of Avraham Avinu.

We see the same yesod later in the parsha. The pasuk says ויען לבן ובתואל ויאמרו מה' יצא הדבר. Eliezer comes to find a shidduch for Yitzchak. He tells them the whole story, and the first thing Lavan and Besuel say is מה' יצא הדבר: this comes straight from Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

Nu? We do not find that Lavan and Besuel were great ma'aminim. Lavan had told Eliezer, "I have cleared the house." He meant cleared of avodah zarah. He was no ma'amin; he had avodah zarah. So how does he suddenly become a great ma'amin, announcing מה' יצא הדבר? What are they saying?

Look at what happens next. Right away they say מה' יצא הדבר and agree to the shidduch. The next morning they are suddenly wishy-washy. What happened? You agreed! What became of מה' יצא הדבר? What changed?

Lechorah the pshat is that Lavan and Besuel never wanted a shidduch with Avraham Avinu. Lavan was looking for an eitzah to get at the money. He wanted to kill Eliezer and take his money. They were not interested at all.

So picture it. How do they stop the shidduch? How do they make sure it does not go through?

Here is what they said. What happens when someone comes to suggest a shidduch? He lists all the good ma'alos, and right away the other side says, "Fine, that's it, let's finish it. We'll make a l'chaim."

Did you ever hear of such a thing? If someone told you, "We're ready to finalize right now," what is the first thing that would come to your mind? Something smells off. If a person is ready to close a shidduch without making any inquiries, something is wrong. It sounds like they want it over and done with before you realize what you got yourself into.

That was Lavan and Besuel's thinking. If we say, "We'll think it over," that only shows we are more interested than we want to seem. So instead they said: "Fine! We'll finalize it today, right now. We'll finish it and it'll be done."

They expected Eliezer to say: "Something is off here. If you are in such a hurry to go into this, I'm not interested."

What was wrong with their cheshbon? They did not know who they were dealing with. This was Eliezer! The whole parsha shows the great ma'alah of bitachon that Eliezer had. He did nothing on his own. He davened to Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and Hakadosh Baruch Hu would take care of it.

So Hakadosh Baruch Hu arranged that the very thing they meant to use to break the shidduch was, in Eliezer's eyes, its biggest ma'alah. They said מה' יצא הדבר, and Eliezer heard מה' יצא הדבר. "Avadai! That is the best thing. That is exactly what I want."

Whatever they planned, it came out punkt farkert. They thought Eliezer would refuse, and Eliezer agreed on the spot. Hakadosh Baruch Hu had arranged it, and it really was מה' יצא הדבר.

So it comes out that we see the very same yesod. We cannot look at things with our own eyes and say: this is my cheshbon, this is what I wanted, this is what I expected and what is supposed to happen. Hakadosh Baruch Hu runs the world, and He knows many other cheshbonos that we do not understand.

When Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants something to happen, He arranges that exactly what you expect turns out the other way. You think one thing will happen, and Hakadosh Baruch Hu says no, punkt farkert, because that is what He wants. That is the lesson we see here.

Sources

באר שבע סוטה מב. ד"ה מה שוטר שיש ממונה על:
פרש"י השופט ממונה על השוטר שהשוטר עשוי לנגוש את מי שיצוה השופט לכוף וכן$ פרש"י בחומש גבי שופטים ושוטרים תתן לך וגו'. וקשה לי דא"כ היאך נקרא השוטר ממונה דהא אין לשוטר גדולה כלל מעצמו והלא אפילו הסגן לאו ממונה נקרא מטעם שאין לו גדולה מעצמו. לכן נ"ל דהאי ודברו השוטרים אינו כמו שופטים ושוטרים תתן לך וגו' כי אלו השוטרים הם השרים המושלים מגזירת משטרי הארץ והא דקאמר מה שוטר שיש ממונה על גביו היינו המלך ... והוי האי שוטר דהכא דומה להא דפרש"י בחומש פרשת חיי שרה בפסוק ועפרון ישב אותו היום מנוהו שוטר עליהם מפני חשיבותו של אברהם שהיה צריך לו עלה לגדולה ובעל כרחך צריך לפרש האי שוטר שר ומושל כדאיתא בהדיא בב"ר ועפרון ישב רבי יצחק אמר ישב כתיב אותו היום מנוהו ארכיסטרטיגוס דלא יהא בר נש רב זבין מן בר נש זעיר וארכיסטרטיגוס היינו גדול שבנציבים וכו'