ישלח מלאכו לפניך

לקוטי שיחות חלק כה · חיי שרה ב · עמ׳ 99–105
משיחות ש״פ חיי שרה תשמ״ב, כ׳ מרחשון תשד״מ

He Will Send His Angel Before You

SICHA Likkutei Sichos vol. 25, Chayei Sarah ב — a sicha of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, on Bereishis 24:7 and 24:40, edited from the farbrengens of Shabbos Chayei Sarah 5742 and 20 Marcheshvan 5744

QUESTION Avraham said the angel would go *before* Eliezer; Eliezer told Besuel the angel would go *with* him — and Rashi, who treats that very distinction as substantive in Noach, says nothing

ARRIVES AT What hatzlachah is, how a promise can be certain where another person's free choice is involved, and the directive for shluchim drawn from "the conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs"

> Bilingual study edition: the Rebbe's Yiddish opposite an English translation with the elucidation woven clause by clause, deep-dive commentary at the point of use, a summary for each section, a Shabbos-table dvar Torah, and the complete footnote apparatus. Created with reader feedback; corrections welcome.

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Why this sicha, this Shabbos.

Shabbos Chayei Sarah is the Shabbos of the shluchim, and this is the sicha in which the Rebbe takes the parsha of Eliezer — the first shliach — and reads out of a single changed preposition the whole theory of what a shliach may expect from Above. Its closing section is addressed to shluchim by name, and its last sentence is the Rambam's promise of the end of galus.

OPENCHASSIDUS

About this edition

How to read the English column

Bold type renders the Rebbe's Yiddish words themselves. *Lighter italic* is editorial elucidation — a gloss, a source, a spelled-out mechanism — woven into the sentence at the point where a reader new to the sicha needs it. Read only the bold and you have the sicha; read both and you have the sicha taught. The elucidation carries no authority beyond itself; where it departs from the Yiddish, the Yiddish governs. Footnote content is summarised in italic where it bears on the argument; the footnotes themselves are reproduced as printed in the apparatus at the back.

The Hebrew column

The right-hand column carries the sicha's original Yiddish as printed in Likkutei Sichos vol. 25, pp. 99–105, taken from the published digital text and corrected word by word against the printed page images. Printed footnote superscripts are reproduced where they fall. Small gold markers (עמ׳ 100) show where each printed page begins, so a citation such as "p. 102" can be located; the source has no line numbering and none is imposed. The text is never reconstructed from memory.

Genre and structure

This is a **sicha** — a talk, edited for print — not a maamar. It has eight printed sections (א–ח), kept as eight units here. Each follows the same sequence: a *Before we read* orientation, the bilingual body, deep-dive boxes for foundational concepts at the point of use, and a summary. After the eight sections come a Shabbos-table dvar Torah with a practical avodah, a glossary, the apparatus and the method note.

Citations

The apparatus reproduces all 57 printed footnotes (and their three starred sub-notes) as printed. Each is classified VERIFIED — confirmed against the cited source or a readily checkable reference (32 notes) — or AS CITED — a real source reproduced as the printing gives it, with an internal locator (page, volume, siman) not independently opened here (25 notes). Nothing is dressed as confirmed at a confidence higher than it was checked at. A misattribution in matters of Torah is a substantive wrong, not a formatting error.

Spot-check before print

Footnotes 11, 16, 23, 25 and 42 are long and heavily abbreviated; they were re-read at full resolution and the digital text corrected where it disagreed with the page image (e.g. fn 36 "שם, כא"; fn 55 "לאדני"). A reader preparing this for print should spot-check those five against the printed page.

OPENCHASSIDUS

The argument at a glance

Eight moves, one changed word: what does it mean that the angel went *before* Eliezer rather than *with* him — and what does that promise to anyone sent on a mission whose outcome depends on someone else's choice?

THE QUESTION	Avraham: the angel will go *before you*. Eliezer to Besuel: the angel will go *with you*. Rashi in Noach proves with/before is a real distinction — so why is Rashi silent here? Because the answer is already in the reader's hands. (§א)
TWO MODES	"With you": the angel supports an effort that stays yours. "Before you": the angel goes ahead and secures the outcome before you arrive. Assistance versus pre-arrangement. (§ב)
THE EVIDENCE	Rivkah came out before Eliezer finished praying; Besuel was removed when he obstructed; Rivkah said "I will go" to a match never discussed with her. The mission ran on pre-arranged success. (§ג)
WHY "WITH YOU"	Tell Besuel "the angel already did it" and there is nothing to negotiate. Eliezer omitted rather than altered. The reversed order of gift and question follows from the same shift. (§ד)
SUCCESS	Eliezer added "and make your way successful." True hatzlachah is a gift from above — higher than "I toiled and found," where toil still draws the find. So the addition restores "before you." Besuel: "the thing has come from Hashem." (§ה)
FREE CHOICE	Avraham guaranteed "you shall take a wife" though consent is free. "Before you" is a source above human effort and will: not produced by striving, not blocked by refusal. A woman will be found who freely chooses. (§ו)
THE SERVANTS	"The servants' conversation is finer than the sons' Torah": success that reaches even into another's free choice. Two conditions — be an eved, owning nothing; and sichah, pray. That bittul makes a vessel. (§ז)
THE SHLIACH	The servants' conversation is written into the sons' Torah, so the sons can become servants. The shliach who gives all his strength but disclaims results has stopped at effort. Stand as an eved, pray — and "before you" success is assured, until the other Jew becomes a lamp. The Torah has promised Israel will do teshuvah and be redeemed. (§ח)

Two versions of one promise — and a Rashi that is missing

BEFORE WE READ

Chayei Sarah tells the story of Eliezer's mission twice: once as it happens (Bereishis 24:1–27) and once as Eliezer retells it in Besuel's house (24:34–49). The Sages famously drew from this doubling the dictum "the conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs is finer than the Torah of the sons" (Rashi 24:42) — a line the sicha will reach in section ז. Here the Rebbe opens with a small, precise discrepancy between the two tellings. Avraham said the angel would go *before* you (לפניך); Eliezer reports that Avraham said the angel would go *with* you (אתך). The usual way to dismiss this — Eliezer paraphrased freely, and the commentators list many such variations — is closed off by a Rashi three parshiyos earlier, where Rashi insists that the difference between "walking *with* G-d" (Noach) and "walking *before* Him" (Avraham) is a difference of substance. Since Rashi treats before/with as meaningful there, his silence here must mean the reader is expected to work it out alone. The whole sicha is that working-out.

1. In this week's sedra it is related how Avraham Avinu instructed Eliezer his servant, "To my land and to my birthplace you shall go, and take a wife for my son, for Yitzchak." *Bereishis 24:4 — the charge itself.* **And to Eliezer's question, "Perhaps the woman will not wish to follow me to this land; shall I then bring your son back...?"** *24:5 — the servant raises the one contingency he cannot control: her consent,* **Avraham answered: "Beware lest you return [my son]... Hashem... will send His angel before you (לפניך), and you shall take a wife for my son from there."** *24:6–7. Hold on to the word: לפניך, "before you."*

א. אין היינטיקער סדרה וועט דערציילט ווי אברהם אבינו האט אנגעזאגט אליעזר עבדו "אל ארצי ואל מולדתי תלך ולקחת אשה לבני ליצחק"[1]. און אויף שאלת אליעזר "אולי לא תאבה האשה ללכת אחרי אל הארץ הזאת ההשב אשיב את בנך גו"[2], האט אברהם געענטפערט: השמר לך פן תשיב גו' ה' גו' ישלח מלאכו לפניך ולקחת אשה לבני משם[3].

Further on in the sedra, where it is related how Eliezer repeated to Besuel the words Avraham had spoken to him, it says: "And (Avraham) said to me, Hashem, before Whom... will send His angel with you (אתך) and make your way successful, and you shall take a wife for my son from my family..." *24:40. Two words have changed hands: "before you" has become "with you," and a clause Avraham never said — "and make your way successful" (והצליח דרכך) — has appeared. The sicha will treat each in turn: the first change in sections ב–ד, the added clause in section ה.*

ווייטער אין דער סדרה, וואו עס וועט דערציילט[4] ווי אליעזר האט פאר בתואל'ן איבערגעזאגט די רייד פון אברהם'ן צו אים, שטייט[5]: ויאמר (אברהם) אלי ה' אשר גו' ישלח מלאכו אתך והצליח דרכך ולקחת אשה לבני ממשפחתי גו'.

One must understand: why did Eliezer alter Avraham's wording, and instead of "He will send His angel before you" say "He will send His angel with you"? *Footnote 6 notes that the Alshich asked the same question, answering by way of derush (homiletics) that Eliezer hinted the angel was subordinate to him; the Rebbe sets that aside because the sicha works on the level of pshat — the plain reading a five-year-old learning Chumash would arrive at.*

דארף מען פארשטיין: פארוואס האט אליעזר משנה געווען פון לשון אברהם, און אנשטאט "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" האט ער געזאגט "ישלח מלאכו אתך"[6]?

מען קען ניט פארענטפערן, אז דאס איז ניט מער ווי א שינוי אין לשון, וואס בייט ניט דעם תוכן (און ווי מ'זעט אז אין די פסוקים זיינען דא כו"כ שינויי לשון אליעזר ווי ער האט איבערגעזאגט דברי אברהם לגבי דברי אברהם עצמו[7])

One cannot answer that this is no more than a change of wording that does not alter the content (as one sees that in these verses there are many changes of wording between Eliezer's retelling of Avraham's words and Avraham's own words) *— the Radak (24:39, footnote 7) says exactly this: "there are variations in the words, but the meaning is one." It is the natural first move, and the Rebbe closes it off —*

— ווייל שוין אין א פריערדיקער סדרה[8], איז רש"י (בפירושו על התורה) שטעלט זיך אויף אן ענלעכן שינוי — און ערקלערט אים, איז אים מבאר "את האלקים התהלך נח, ובאברהם הוא אומר[5] אשר התהלכתי לפניו, נח הי' צריך סעד לתומכו אבל אברהם הי' מתחזק ומהלך בצדקו מאליו". איז דערפון מוכח, אז דער שינוי פון "את" און "לפניו" איז א חילוק אין תוכן, וואס פאדערט א פירוש (אויך) ע"ד הפשט.

— because already in an earlier sedra, Rashi (in his commentary on the Torah) pauses over a similar change and explains it: "'Noach walked with G-d' — whereas of Avraham it says 'before Whom I walked.' Noach needed support to hold him up, but Avraham would strengthen himself and walk in his righteousness on his own." *Rashi on Bereishis 6:9, the opening of Noach. The verse Rashi quotes for Avraham is our very verse, 24:40 — "before Whom I walked" (אשר התהלכתי לפניו) is the clause that immediately precedes "He will send His angel with you." So the one verse holds both the "before" of Avraham's walking and the "with" of the angel's sending (footnote 10).* **From this it is proven that the change between "with" and "before" is a difference in content, which demands an explanation (also) on the level of pshat.** *Rashi's own method is the proof: he does not comment on stylistic variation, only on what disturbs the plain sense. If with/before disturbed him in Noach, it is a real distinction.*

איז לפ"ז ניט מובן: פארוואס שטעלט זיך ניט רש"י[9] בפרשתנו אויף דעם שינוי צווישן "לפניך" און "אתך"[10]?

According to this it is not understood: why does Rashi not pause, in our parsha, over the change between "before you" and "with you"? *Footnote 9 adds that even the Abarbanel, who catalogued the many discrepancies between Eliezer's speech and Avraham's, did not notice this one.*

מוז מען זאגן, אז נאך דעם ווי רש"י האט שוין פריער מבאר געווען דעם חילוק צווישן די צוויי לשונות און דעם טעם השינוי — איז לערנענדיק דעם סיפור בפרשתנו איז שוין מובן מאליו דער טעם פארוואס אליעזר האט משנה געווען פון דברי אברהם.

One must say that once Rashi has already explained earlier the difference between the two expressions and the reason for the change — then, when learning the story in our parsha, the reason why Eliezer altered Avraham's words is already self-evident. *This is the sicha's thesis stated as a claim about Rashi: the answer is already in the reader's hands, if he reads the story with the Noach distinction in mind. Sections ב–ד supply what "self-evident" means.*

DEEP DIVE

Rashi on Noach: "with" versus "before" as a map of two kinds of help

Rashi on Bereishis 6:9 (VERIFIED) reads the preposition as a diagnosis of the person. Noach "walked *with* G-d": the Hebrew את here means accompaniment, and Rashi hears in it dependence — Noach "needed support to hold him up" (סעד לתומכו). Avraham "walked *before* Him": he went ahead on his own strength, "strengthening himself and walking in his righteousness by himself." The preposition encodes who initiates and who carries.

The sicha lifts this map off the men and lays it over the angel. In section ב the same two words will describe two modes of divine assistance: an angel who walks *with* the agent, supporting an effort that remains the agent's own; and an angel who walks *before* him, settling the outcome before the agent arrives. Rashi's Noach comment is the key because it establishes, on the level of pshat, that these are not synonyms — and the Rebbe insists on reading Rashi as a system: a distinction Rashi makes once is a distinction the reader carries forward.

Why the question "why is Rashi silent?" is a real question: in the Rebbe's Rashi sichos, Rashi's commentary is held to be exhaustive for the five-year-old's difficulties. If an apparent difficulty draws no comment, either it is not a difficulty on the level of pshat, or Rashi has already equipped the reader to solve it. Here it is the second — and that is what the whole sicha sets out to demonstrate.

SUMMARY · SECTION 1

Avraham promised an angel *before you*; Eliezer reports an angel *with you*. "Mere paraphrase" is unavailable, because Rashi in Noach treats the with/before distinction as substantive — and quotes our very verse to do it. Rashi's silence in Chayei Sarah therefore means the answer is already in the reader's possession.

With you, before you: two modes of success

BEFORE WE READ

The section is short and does the sicha's conceptual work. Take the two prepositions literally. An angel "with you" accompanies: the mission is yours, the effort is yours, and heaven supports it so that it succeeds — Rashi's סעד לתומכו. An angel "before you" precedes: he goes ahead and secures the outcome before you arrive, so that your effort does not produce the success but walks into one already prepared. The Rebbe names this "an essential difference in the mode of action and success" — the difference between help and pre-arrangement.

2. The explanation of this may be suggested as follows:

ב. ויש לומר דעם ביאור אין דעם:

The difference in meaning (and content) between "with you" and "before you" is the plain sense of the words: "with you" means "together with you," and "before you" — "ahead of you." That is, "He will send His angel with you" means that the angel will go together with Eliezer and help him carry out the mission successfully — in the language of the Rashi cited above (regarding Noach), "support to hold him up"; whereas "He will send His angel before you" means that the angel will go "in advance" *— footnote 11 cites the Bachya on 24:15, "the angel preceded him," and Bereishis Rabbah 59:10 —* **and secure in advance the success of Eliezer's mission.**

דער חילוק אין טייטש (ותוכן) צווישן "אתך" און "לפניך" איז פשוטן כמשמען: "אתך" מיינט — "מיט דיר", און "לפניך" — עמ' 100 "פאר דיר". דאס הייסט "ישלח מלאכו אתך" מיינט, אז דער מלאך וועט גיין צוזאמען מיט אליעזר'ן און אים העלפן דורכפירן די שליחות בהצלחה, ובלשון רש"י הנ"ל (בייַ נחן) — "סעד לתומכו"; משא"כ "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" מיינט — אז דער מלאך וועט גיין "פאראויס"[11] און פארזיכערן פון פריער די הצלחה פון אליעזר'ס שליחות.

And this is an essential difference in the mode of the action and of the success: *not a difference of degree — more help versus less — but of structure: who is the cause of the outcome.*

וואס דאס איז א חילוק עיקרי אין אופן הפעולה וההצלחה:

In the first case the main thing is the act of effort on Eliezer's part; the angel merely adds assistance ("support to hold him up") so that his effort should succeed; *the human initiative is the engine, heaven is the lubricant.*

אין דעם ערשטן פאל איז דער עיקר — די פעולת ההשתדלות מצד אליעזר'ן, נאר דער מלאך וועט צוגעבן א סיוע ("סעד לתומכו") אז זיין השתדלות זאל מצליח זיין;

But "He will send His angel before you" means that the angel will not only assist toward and within the effort, but prepares it and secures the success of Eliezer's effort in advance. *Eliezer still travels, still speaks, still negotiates — but he is walking into a result that was fixed before he set out. The effort is real; it is simply not what produces the outcome.*

אבער "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" מיינט, אז דער מלאך וועט ניט נאר מסייע זיין צו און אין דער השתדלות, נאר ער גרייט זי צו און פארזיכערט די הצלחה פון השתדלות אליעזר פון פאראויס.

DEEP DIVE

Siyua and hachanah: assistance versus pre-arrangement

Chassidus knows many gradations of how the Above relates to human action; the sicha isolates two, on the level of pshat, and gives them names drawn from the verse itself. *Siyua* (סיוע) is help: the human effort is primary and the divine contribution is an addition that lets the effort reach its goal. *Hachanah mera'sh* — preparation in advance — is categorically different: the outcome is settled before the effort begins, so the effort is the vehicle through which a settled outcome is delivered, not its cause.

Why this matters for everything that follows: the two modes behave differently under pressure. Assistance can fail — an effort may fall short even with help. Pre-arrangement cannot, because nothing downstream of it is load-bearing. Section ג will show that Eliezer's mission displays every mark of the second mode: Rivkah appears before he finishes praying, Besuel is removed when he tries to obstruct, and Rivkah consents instantly to a match no one has discussed with her. Section ו will then draw the sharp consequence — that even human free choice, which is otherwise untouchable, does not obstruct a success of this kind.

SUMMARY · SECTION 2

Read the prepositions literally. *With you*: the angel accompanies and supports an effort that remains Eliezer's own. *Before you*: the angel goes ahead and secures the outcome before Eliezer arrives. The first is assistance; the second is pre-arrangement. Avraham promised the second.

The evidence: beginning, middle and end of the mission

BEFORE WE READ

Having defined "before you" as success secured in advance, the Rebbe now reads the narrative to show that this is exactly what happened — at three points. At the *beginning*, Rivkah comes out before Eliezer has finished his prayer, so her arrival was not even a response to his request. In the *middle*, Besuel tries to obstruct and (Rashi 24:55) an angel kills him. At the *end*, Rivkah is asked whether she will go and answers "I will go" — "of my own accord, even if you do not wish it" (Rashi 24:58) — though no one, as the footnotes argue at length, had ever discussed the match with her. The bracketed paragraph deals with the one apparent counter-evidence: Eliezer did pray, and G-d did seem to wait for the prayer. The Rebbe's answer is that the waiting served Eliezer's sign, not Rivkah's coming.

ג. און דאס איז אברהם געווען אויסן מיט זיין זאגן "ישלח מלאכו לפניך", אז די הצלחה פון אליעזר בשליחותו זאל זיין אין אופן אז דער אויבערשטער באווארנט מלכתחילה אז די זאך זאל זיך אפטאן כראוי, אן שווערישקייטן — און אזוי איז עס טאקע געווען:

3. And this is what Avraham intended with his saying "He will send His angel before you": that the success of Eliezer in his mission should be in a manner in which the Alm-ghty ensures from the outset that the matter be accomplished properly, without difficulties — and so indeed it was: *what follows is the proof from the text, in three movements.*

סיי גלייך ביים אנהייב פון מהלך העניינים: אנקומענדיק אין "ארם נהרים . . אל באר המים"[12], האט אליעזר ניט געדארפט ווארטן אפילו, ווייל "והנה רבקה יוצאת גו'"[13]. ויתרה מזה: דאס איז ניט געווען קיין תוצאה פון אליעזר'ס תפלה "הקרה נא לפני היום גו"[14] בשלימותה — ווארום דער פסוק זאגט[13] "ויהי הוא טרם כלה לדבר והנה רבקה יוצאת גו" (נאך איידער[15] ער האט פארענדיקט זיין תפילה)[16] — עס איז מלכתחילה געווען אויסגעשטעלט מלמעלה אז זי זאל קומען באלד נאך אליעזר'ס אנקום.

Right at the beginning of the course of events: arriving at "Aram Naharayim... to the well of water" (24:10–11), Eliezer did not even have to wait, because "behold, Rivkah was coming out..." (24:15). And more than that: this was not a result of Eliezer's prayer "Cause it to happen before me today..." (24:12ff.) in its completeness — for the verse says, "And it was, before he had finished speaking, behold Rivkah was coming out..." (even before *— footnote 15: Rashi on Bereishis 2:5 establishes that* טרם *means "not yet" —* **he had finished his prayer)** *— footnote 16 is a small essay: the Midrash says Eliezer was answered "in the utterance of his mouth," which is a higher level than ordinary answered prayer; but on the level of pshat, "before he had finished" proves her coming was not a consequence of the prayer at all. The plain reading is that she left her house before he began to pray. Rashi's later phrase "Rivkah was made to meet him in his prayer" (24:66) means it was a success, a miracle, that she turned up during his prayer — not that the prayer produced her.* **— it was arranged from the outset, from Above, that she should come immediately after Eliezer's arrival.**

און אזוי — סיי מצד אליעזר, וואס (ווי רש"י זאגט[17]) "קפצה לו הארץ", און סיי מצד רבקה, אז זי איז ארויס מביתה באופן אז "ויהי הוא טרם כלה לדבר והנה רבקה יוצאת גו".

And so — both from Eliezer's side, in that (as Rashi says, 24:42) "the earth contracted for him," *he left and arrived the same day,* **and from Rivkah's side, in that she left her house in such a way that "before he had finished speaking, behold Rivkah was coming out."** *Both parties were moved into place; neither was responding to the other.*

[It may be suggested that the fact that Hashem, the Alm-ghty, waited (with Rivkah's arrival at the well) until (the end of) Eliezer's prayer *— footnote 18 points ahead to section ז for the inner dimension of this —* was only so that, by means of the sign he had set out for himself in his prayer, he should be able to know that "she is the woman whom Hashem has designated for my master's son" (24:44);

[וי"ל אז דאס וואס "הויי", דער אויבערשטער האט געווארט (מיט ביאת רבקה אל הבאר) ביז (סיום) תפילת אליעזר[18] — איז געווען נאר צוליב דעם, אז דורך דעם סימן וואס ער האט פאר זיך אנגעצייכנט בתפלתו זאל ער קענען וויסן אז "היא האשה אשר הוכיח ה' לבן אדוני"[19],

but her coming itself had already been secured, as above, even before he prayed]: *The prayer gave Eliezer certainty; it did not give him Rivkah.*

אבער איר עצם קומען איז שוין באווארנט געווארן, כנ"ל, נאך איידער ער האט מתפלל געווען]:

And likewise in the middle of the matter and the words — when Besuel wanted to obstruct the match, "an angel came and killed him" (Rashi 24:55); *the one human actor who tried to intervene against the outcome was removed, and not by Eliezer.*

עמ' 101 ועד"ז באמצע הענין והדברים — איז בשעת בתואל האט געווואלט מעכב זיין דעם שידוך, איז "בא מלאך והמיתו"[20];

And so too at the conclusion of the matter — when Eliezer wanted Rivkah to go with him at once (not as "her brother and mother" insisted, that "the girl shall stay with us a year...," 24:55), and the response to this was "Let us call the girl and ask her" — Rivkah answered immediately: "I will go" (24:57–58)

און אזוי אויך בסיום הענין — וועז אליעזר האט געווואלט אז רבקה זאל גלייך גיין מיט אים (ניט ווי "אחי' ואמה" זיינען באשטאנען אז "תשב הנערה אתנו ימים גו'"[21]) און דערוף איז געווען דער ענטפער "נקרא לנערה ונשאלה את פי'", האט רבקה תיכף געענטפערט — "אלך"[22]

— whereas, seemingly, we do not find that Eliezer had spoken with her at all beforehand about the match *(footnote 23 argues this at length: she was not present when Eliezer spoke with Besuel — a three-year-old would not be summoned to the adults' negotiation, and they did not yet know she was the subject; and Rashi's "from here, that a woman is married only with her consent" implies that no one, not even Besuel, had yet raised the match with her)* (he had merely given her gifts of jewelry, etc.) *— and footnote 24: gifts are obviously no reason to agree to a marriage, to go off with a stranger, against the will of her brother and mother —* in a way that she would have had time to think and reflect on it; and nevertheless, immediately upon being asked whether she agreed to the match, she said "I will go" — and as Rashi adds and explains, "I will go: of my own accord, and even if you do not wish it"! That is to say: the Alm-ghty so arranged it *— footnote 26: this answers the Tosafists' question on Rashi, "was Rivkah so forward as to go without her brother's and mother's permission?" — it was effected by the angel; the success was from Hashem —* that she should agree without any effort on Eliezer's part. *Footnote 27 extends the pattern to the return journey: Yitzchak happened to go out to the field exactly as they arrived (24:63–64), "without delays."*

— דלכאורה: מען געפינט ניט, אז אליעזר האט מיט איר פריער בכלל געדעדט וועגן דעם שידוך[23] (ער האט איר בלויז געגעבן מתנות[24] פון תכשיטים[25] כו'), באופן אז זי זאל האבן צייט אויף טראכטן און איינטראכטן אין דעם; און אעפ"כ, איז גלייך ביים פרעגן איר צי זי איז מסכים אויפן שידוך, האט זי געזאגט "אלך", און ווי רש"י איז מוסיף ומפרש — "אלך, מעצמי ואף אם אינכם רוצים"! דאס הייסט: דער אויבערשטער האט אזוי געמאכט[26] אז זי זאל מסכים זיין אן קיין השתדלות מצד אליעזר[27].

DEEP DIVE

Before he had finished speaking: the pshat of an answered prayer (footnote 16)

The Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah 60:4) lists Eliezer among those who were answered "in the utterance of their mouth" — a mark of great favour. Footnote 16 does something careful with this. It grants that being answered *before* finishing is an even higher level than being answered at once. But it then insists that on the plain reading, טרם כלה לדבר proves the opposite of what a reader might assume: Rivkah's exit from her house must have preceded the prayer, so her coming was not a response to it. Rashi's phrase "Rivkah was made to meet him in his prayer" (24:66) is re-read accordingly: not that the prayer effected it, but that it was a *hatzlachah*, a miracle, that she happened to arrive mid-prayer.

The distinction is the sicha's whole architecture in miniature. A prayer answered is still the *with-you* mode: effort (prayer) followed by result. A result that precedes the effort is the *before-you* mode. The Rebbe reads the narrative's chronology as the text's own testimony to which mode governed the mission.

DEEP DIVE

"I will go — of my own accord": Rivkah's consent and the Tosafists' question (footnotes 23–26)

Rashi on 24:58 (VERIFIED): "I will go: of myself, even if you do not wish it." The Tosafists on the Torah (Hadar Zekeinim, footnote 26) are troubled: is this not brazen in a young girl — to leave without her family's leave? The sicha's answer is that the question assumes Rivkah's consent was a human decision reached by ordinary means, and it was not. Footnotes 23–25 build the case that she could not have reached it by ordinary means: she was absent from the negotiation; the gifts were given at the well and again after Besuel's speech but, the starred note argues, with a gap of time during which Besuel died (which is why "delicacies to her brother and mother" omits him); and no one had told her she was the subject. Her instant, unconditional "I will go" is therefore not forwardness but the visible trace of an outcome secured from above — "G-d so arranged it that she should agree without any effort on Eliezer's part." Section I will return to this: it is the one place where pre-arranged success touches the free will of another person.

SUMMARY · SECTION 3

Three proofs that the mission ran on pre-arranged success. Beginning: Rivkah came out before Eliezer finished praying — the prayer served his sign, not her arrival. Middle: when Besuel tried to obstruct, an angel removed him. End: Rivkah, never consulted, answered "I will go — even if you do not wish it." At no point did Eliezer's effort produce the result.

Why Eliezer said "with you" to Besuel — and reversed the order of the gifts

BEFORE WE READ

Now the original question is answered. If Eliezer had told Besuel "the angel went before me and settled everything," Besuel's natural reply would have been: then why are we talking? The whole negotiation would be exposed as theatre. So Eliezer, speaking to a man whose consent he was requesting, reported the promise in its weaker form — "with you," assistance — leaving Besuel his dignity as a party to a decision. Footnote 29 defends Eliezer against the charge of misquoting Avraham: "before you" includes "with you," so he omitted rather than altered. The section then turns to a second discrepancy Rashi *does* comment on — Eliezer gave the jewelry before asking "whose daughter are you?" but told Besuel the reverse. The two discrepancies turn out to be one: knowing the angel had gone before him, Eliezer was certain of her identity before he asked; retelling it in "with you" terms, that certainty would have looked reckless, so he reordered.

4. On this basis one will also understand why Eliezer altered Avraham's words and said "He will send His angel with you" — because with Besuel such talk ("He will send His angel before you") would not have been accepted:

ד. עפ"ז וועט מען אויך פארשטיין פארוואס אליעזר האט משנה געווען פון דברי אברהם און געזאגט "ישלח מלאכו אתך" — ווייל ביי בתואל'ן וואלט זיך ניט אנגענומען אזעלכע רייד ("ישלח מלאכו לפניך"):

When Eliezer was speaking with Besuel and wanted to obtain from him his consent to the match, there was no place to relate that Avraham had said "He will send His angel before you" — which means (as above) that the matter would be accomplished beforehand, prior to Eliezer's arrival and without his effort — because, if so (Besuel would have argued), what is the point of this whole speech and negotiation with him? By your own account, the "angel" has already done everything... *Eliezer's choice of words is tact, and more than tact: a person asked for consent must be addressed as someone whose consent matters.*

בשעת אליעזר האט געדעדט מיט בתואל'ן און געוואלט האבן פון אים זיין הסכמה אויפן שידוך, האט קיין ארט ניט צו דערציילן אז אברהם האט געזאגט "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" — וואס באדייט (כנ"ל) אז די זאך וועט אפגעטאן ווערן [עמ' 102] נאך קודם, פאר אליעזר'ס קומען און בלי זיין השתדלות — ווייל, אויב אזוי (וואלט בתואל געטענה'ט), צו וואס די גאנצע רייד און משא־ומתן מיט עם? לדבריך, האט דאך דער "מלאך" שוין אלץ אפגעטאן...

Therefore Eliezer had to alter it *(footnote 28 points to a parallel in Vayeira 18:13, where G-d Himself alters Sarah's words when reporting them to Avraham)* **and say "He will send His angel with you."** *Footnote 29 pre-empts the objection — how could Eliezer attribute to Avraham something he did not say? First, Rashi himself (24:47) supplies the reason and the licence for Eliezer "changing the order so that they should not catch him in his words." Second, and more fundamentally, this was never a change at all: "before you" obviously includes "with you" — an angel who goes ahead also accompanies — so Eliezer simply did not tell the whole of it.*

דעריבער האט אליעזר געמוזט משנה זיין[28] און זאגן "ישלח מלאכו אתך".[29]

ע"פ הנ"ל יומתק נאך א שינוי בדיבורו של אליעזר, אנדערש ווי דאס איז געווען למעשה — געגעבן האט ער רבקה'ן דעם "נזם זהב גו" נאך איידער ער האט ביי איר געפרעגט "בת מי את"[30], און ביים דערציילן וועגן דעם צו בתואל'ן איז (ווי רש"י[31] זאגט) "שינה הסדר . . שלא יתפשוהו בדבריו ויאמרו היאך נתת לה ועדיין אינך יודע מי היא":

In light of the above, another change in Eliezer's speech, different from what actually happened, gains in flavour — he gave Rivkah the "gold ring..." before he asked her "whose daughter are you?" (24:22–23), and when relating this to Besuel he (as Rashi says, 24:47) "changed the order... so that they should not catch him in his words and say, how could you give to her while you still do not know who she is": *Rashi gives the motive; the sicha will now give the mechanism — why the true order was reasonable for Eliezer and would have been unreasonable in the retelling.*

דאס וואס אליעזר האט געגעבן רבקה'ן די מתנות נאך איידער ער האט געוואוסט "מי היא" — איז ווייל וויסנדיק אז אברהם האט געזאגט "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" און בפרט זעענדיק אז "טרם כלה לדבר והנה רבקה יוצאת" און זי האט זיך געפירט בהתאם צום סימן — האט ער שוין פארשטאנען און געוואוסט אז דאס האט דער מלאך באווארנט פון פאראויס, ובמילא איז ער געווען זיכער אז "הצליח הקב"ה דרכו"[32];

That Eliezer gave Rivkah the gifts before he knew "who she is" — is because, knowing that Avraham had said "He will send His angel before you," and especially seeing that "before he had finished speaking, behold Rivkah was coming out" and that she conducted herself in accordance with the sign — he already understood and knew that the angel had secured this in advance, and consequently he was certain that "the Holy One, blessed be He, had made his way successful" *(Rashi 24:23; and 24:21, "astonished and alarmed at seeing his words close to success" — footnote 32). Given "before you," giving first and asking afterward was not rashness; it was the correct inference from a settled outcome.*

משא"כ לויטן אופן ווי ער האט עס געזאגט צו בתואל'ן, וואו ער האט משנה געווען פון "(ישלח מלאכו) לפניך" אויף "(ישלח מלאכו) אתך", האט קיין ארט ניט אזא זיכערקייט, ביז צו געבן איר די מתנות נאך איידער ער ווייס "מי היא", ובמילא — "שינה הסדר . . שלא יתפשוהו בדבריו . . היאך נתת כו'".

Whereas according to the way he told it to Besuel, where he had changed "(He will send His angel) before you" to "(He will send His angel) with you," there is no room for such certainty — to the point of giving her the gifts before he knows "who she is"; and consequently, "he changed the order... so that they should not catch him in his words... how could you give..." *One premise shifted ("with" instead of "before"), and the whole retelling had to shift with it to stay internally consistent. The two changes Rashi's reader noticed — the preposition and the order of events — are one change.*

DEEP DIVE

Why a messenger edits: Eliezer's retelling as an act of shlichus (footnotes 28–29)

The sicha treats Eliezer's rewording not as a lapse but as the correct conduct of an agent. Three points support it. (1) Footnote 28 gestures toward Vayeira 18:13, where G-d reports Sarah's laughter to Avraham without her words "and my master is old" — the Torah's own precedent that a faithful report may omit what would wound or derail its hearer. (2) Rashi 24:47 (VERIFIED) explicitly licenses Eliezer's reordering "so that they should not catch him in his words." (3) Footnote 29's deeper claim: "before you" *contains* "with you." An angel who goes ahead to secure the result also, trivially, accompanies the agent and assists in each of his actions. Eliezer therefore stated a true part of Avraham's promise — the part Besuel could hear — and withheld the part that would have made the conversation pointless.

The lesson the final section will draw is already visible: the shliach's task includes meeting the other party where he stands. Besuel needed to experience himself as a decision-maker. Eliezer's "with you" gave him that — even though, as section I will show, the decision had been secured from above all along.

SUMMARY · SECTION 4

Eliezer said "with you" to Besuel because "before you" would have ended the negotiation: if an angel had already settled it, why talk? He omitted rather than altered — "before" includes "with." The same shift explains why he reversed the order of gifts and question: knowing the angel had gone ahead, giving first was sound; told in "with you" terms, it would have looked reckless, so he reordered.

"And make your way successful": what hatzlachah is

BEFORE WE READ

The second change now comes into focus. Eliezer did not merely drop "before you"; he added a clause Avraham never spoke — "and make your way successful" (והצליח דרכך) — and likewise, retelling his prayer, he inserted "if You would please make my way successful." The Rebbe argues that this addition *is* "before you," restated in a form Besuel could accept. To show this he defines success. True hatzlachah is not what a person achieves through toil; it is what G-d gives. The sicha measures it against the Talmud's "I toiled and I found" (Megillah 6b): even there, where the find is out of all proportion to the toil, the toil is still what draws the find. Hatzlachah is higher — a gift unconnected to effort. Hence Besuel's own words on hearing the story: "the thing has come from Hashem; we cannot speak to you bad or good."

ה. אע"פ אז בפשטות ובגלוי האט אליעזר ניט דערציילט דעם פרט פון "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" — האט ער אבער דעם ענין מרמז געווען (ובמילא איז דער שינוי — נאך קלענער), דערמיט וואס ער האט צוגעלייגט די ווערטער "(ישלח מלאכו אתך) והצליח דרכך" (וועלכע מען געפינט ניט בפירוש בדברי אברהם) [ועד"ז ווען ער האט איבערדערציילט זיין תפילה האט ער מוסיף געווען (על לשון תפילתו[14]) "ה' . . אם ישך נא מצליח דרכי גו'"[33]].

5. Although plainly and openly Eliezer did not relate the detail of "He will send His angel before you" — he nevertheless hinted at the matter (and consequently the change is smaller still), in that he added the words "(He will send His angel with you) and make your way successful" (which are not found explicitly in Avraham's words) [and similarly, when he retold his prayer, he added (to the wording of his prayer, 24:12ff.) "Hashem... if You would please make my way successful..." (24:42)]. *Two insertions of the same word, הצלחה, in both retellings. The sicha reads them as a deliberate signal.*

דער ביאור אין דעם:

The explanation of this:

דער אמת'ער באדייט פון הצלחה איז (ניט ווען דער מענטש איז מצליח דורך יגיעה, נאר) וואס דער אויבערשטער גיט דעם מענשן[34]. ע"ד ווי עס שטייט ביי יוסף[35] "ויהי ה' את יוסף ויהי איש מצליח . . ה' מצליח בידו . . ואשר הוא עושה ה' מצליח". ועד"ז האט אליעזר מדגיש געווען "וה'[36] הצליח דרכי".

The true meaning of hatzlachah, success, is (not when a person succeeds through toil, but) what the Alm-ghty gives the person *(footnote 34: Ohr HaTorah, Vayeishev 278a–b — the Tzemach Tzedek's treatment of hatzlachah, on which the next footnotes build).* **As it says of Yosef, "And Hashem was with Yosef and he was a successful man... Hashem made [it] succeed in his hand... and whatever he did, Hashem made succeed" (Vayeishev 39:2–3, 23).** *Yosef is the Torah's paradigm of the ish matzliach — and every clause attributes the success to Hashem, not to Yosef's competence.* **And in the same way Eliezer emphasised, "and Hashem has made my way successful" (24:56).** *Footnote 36 collects the recurrences: 24:21, Rashi's "close to success," and the Ohr HaTorah's remark that "success is mentioned of Eliezer... several times."*

עמ' 103 ולהוסיף אז דאס איז מער ווי דער אויפטו פון "יגעתי ומצאתי"[37] — דאע"פ אז דער "מצאתי" איז שלא לפי ערך היגיעה (וכדיוק הלשון "מצאתי" — לשון מציאה — ע"ד ווי א מציאה וואס קומט בלי השתדלות, ניט מער ווי די טירחא הכי מועטת פון אויפהויבן די מציאה), פונדעסטוועגן, איז דער "יגעתי" ממשיך ומכריח דעם "מצאתי";[38]

And to add: this is more than the achievement of "I toiled and I found" (Megillah 6b) — for although the "I found" is out of proportion to the toil (as the precise wording "I found" — the language of a find — indicates: like a find that comes without effort, with no more than the slightest exertion of picking it up), nevertheless the "I toiled" draws down and compels the "I found" *(footnote 38 refers to Likkutei Sichos vol. 13, p. 117ff., where this reading of yagati u'matzasi is developed: the find is disproportionate, but it is still caused by the toil — effort opens the door through which the gift walks in).*

משא"כ דער ענין פון "הצלחה" (אמיתית) איז ניט פארבונדן מיט עבודת האדם, נאר דאס איז א מתנה מלמעלה[39].

Whereas the matter of (true) "hatzlachah" is not bound up with the person's service at all, but is a gift from Above *(footnote 39 cites the Ohr HaTorah's definition — "success is a matter of mazal" — and Likkutei Sichos vol. 19, p. 384ff., on "the gates of success," built on Hemshech 5672 vol. 2, p. 1123ff.; see the deep dive below).*

קומט לפי זה אויס, אז די הוספה פון "(ישלח מלאכו אתך) והצליח דרכך" טראגט אין זיך דעם זעלבן תוכן ווי "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" — ווייל דער ענין פון "הצלחה" איז ווען דאס קומט בדרך מתנה מלמעלה.

It emerges, accordingly, that the addition "(He will send His angel with you) and make your way successful" carries within it the same content as "He will send His angel before you" — because the matter of "hatzlachah" is precisely when something comes by way of a gift from Above. *The two edits cancel into fidelity: Eliezer removed "before you" and put it back as "success." Besuel could hear "the angel will help you and you will succeed" where he could not hear "the angel already did it."*

און דערפאר, בשעת אליעזר האט ארויסגעבראכט פאר בתואלין ווי אזוי זיין תפילה "אם ישך נא מצליח דרכי" איז נתמלא געווארן (און "אני טרם אכלה לדבר גו' והנה רבקה יוצאת גו"[40], האט בתואל גלייך געזאגט[41] — "מה' יצא הדבר לא נוכל לדבר אליך רע או טוב": דאס איז א זאך וואס טוט זיך אפ אינגאנצן מלמעלה, בדרך הצלחה, אזוי, אז א בן אדם קען אין דעם ניט ענדערן[42].

And therefore, when Eliezer laid out before Besuel how his prayer "if You would please make my way successful" had been fulfilled (and "before I had finished speaking... behold Rivkah was coming out...," 24:45), Besuel immediately said (24:50): "The thing has come from Hashem; we cannot speak to you bad or good" — this is a matter that is accomplished entirely from Above, by way of hatzlachah, such that a human being cannot change it. *Besuel got the message that was encoded for him. Footnote 42 adds the Ohr HaTorah's gloss that success "comes from mazal... from where the flow comes swiftly, without delays and judgements" — which sweetens Eliezer's plea "do not delay me, for Hashem has made my way successful": success and delay are opposites. The starred note: "and Hashem (והוי׳)" — wherever "and Hashem" appears it means "He and His court" (Rashi, Vayeira 19:24) — so even the heavenly court endorsed the way, and the flow came "without delays and judgements."*

DEEP DIVE

Hatzlachah and mazal: success above the chain of cause and effect (footnotes 34, 39, 42)

Three Talmudic data points frame the sicha's definition. Megillah 6b (VERIFIED): "If a person says, I toiled and did not find — do not believe him; I did not toil and I found — do not believe him; I toiled and I found — believe him." The sicha reads the third clause carefully: "found" is the language of a windfall, something out of proportion to the effort; yet the Gemara places it after toil because toil is what draws it. That is the ceiling of what effort can do — a disproportionate return, still caused by the work.

Hatzlachah is defined above that ceiling. The Ohr HaTorah (Vayeishev 278, as cited in footnotes 34 and 39) says "success is a matter of mazal," and (footnote 42) that "the root of success is from mazal, from where the flow comes swiftly, without delays and judgements." In Chassidus *mazal* names a source above the ordered chain of cause and effect (seder hishtalshelus) — the level of which the Sages said "there is no mazal for Israel," i.e. Israel's source is above the mazalos, and precisely from there an undeserved, uncaused flow can descend. Likkutei Sichos vol. 19, p. 384ff., on "the gates of success," develops this from Hemshech 5672.

The payoff for the sicha: "before you" and "success" are the same thing seen from two sides. "Before you" says the outcome was settled before the effort; "success" says the outcome does not descend through the effort at all. Both describe a gift. And a gift, unlike a wage, cannot be obstructed by anyone downstream — which is why Besuel, the one man who tried, said "we cannot speak bad or good," and why section ו can extend this even to free will.

SUMMARY · SECTION 5

True success (hatzlachah) is not what effort earns; it is what G-d gives — a gift, higher even than "I toiled and I found," where toil still draws the find. So Eliezer's added "and make your way successful" restores exactly what "before you" said. Besuel heard it: "the thing has come from Hashem; we cannot speak bad or good."

How Avraham could promise what depended on another's free choice

BEFORE WE READ

A difficulty in Avraham's own words is now resolved by the same principle. Eliezer asked, "perhaps the woman will not wish to follow me" — and Avraham answered with a guarantee: "He will send His angel before you *and you shall take* a wife for my son." But a bride's consent is a matter of her free will; how can anyone guarantee it — especially Avraham, who in the next breath allows for "and if the woman does not wish to follow you, you are released from my oath"? The answer is that "before you" names a source that is *prior to* and *higher than* human effort, and therefore not dependent on human effort — in both directions. Success from there does not need human striving to bring it about, and human will cannot "disturb" it. Free choice remains fully real (Avraham's "if she does not wish" is sincere); and yet it is certain that a woman will be found who freely chooses to go.

6. On this basis one will also understand a seemingly puzzling matter in Avraham's words:

ו. עפ"ז וועט מען אויך פארשטיין אן ענין תמוה, לכאורה, בדברי אברהם:

When Eliezer asked (24:5), "Perhaps the woman will not wish to follow me...," Avraham answered him (24:6–7), "Beware... Hashem, G-d of heaven... will send His angel before you and you shall take a wife for my son from there" — the Alm-ghty will send an angel, and consequently he assures him: "and you shall take a wife for my son from there." *The Hebrew* ולקחת *is not a wish but a flat future: you will take.*

בשעת אליעזר האט געפרעגט[2] "אולי לא תאבה האשה ללכת אחרי גו'" האט אברהם אים געענטפערט[3] "השמר לך גו' ה' אלקי השמים גו' ישלח מלאכו לפניך ולקחת אשה לבני משם" — דער אויבערשטער וועט שיקן א מלאך ובמילא איז ער אים מבטיח — "ולקחת אשה לבני משם",

It is not understandable: how can Avraham assure Eliezer "you shall take a wife for my son from there" — when this depends on the will and the free choice of the woman, and especially as Avraham himself immediately continued, "and if the woman does not wish to follow you, you are released from this my oath..." (24:8)? *The guarantee and the escape clause stand side by side. Either the outcome is certain or it is not.*

איז ניט פארשטאנדיק: ווי קען אברהם פארזיכערן אליעזר'ן "ולקחת אשה לבני משם" — בשעת דאס איז תלוי ברצונה ובבחירתה של האשה, און בפרט אז אברהם בעצמו האט גלייך ממשיך געווען "ואם[43] לא תאבה האשה ללכת אחריך ונקית משבועתי זאת גו'"?

But here is the achievement of "He will send His angel before you" — that it derives from such a "place" which is "prior," higher than the person's toil (his service), on account of which the success in this (from the Alm-ghty) is not dependent on the effort of human deeds; and so too in the other direction: the will of a human being cannot "disturb" the success. *This is the hinge of the sicha. "Before" is now read not only temporally (the angel went first) but ontologically: the source is above the level at which human effort and human will operate. Whatever is below that level — striving, consent, refusal — neither produces nor prevents what descends from it.*

נאר דא איז דער אויפטו פון "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" — אז דאס נעמט זיך פון אזא "ארט" וואס איז "פריער", העכער פון יגיעת האדם (עבודתו), וואס דערפאר איז די הצלחה אין דעם (פון עמ' 104 אויבערשטן) ניט תלוי' אין דער השתדלות פון מעשה בני אדם; און אזוי אויך לאידך גיסא, אז דער רצון פון א בן אדם קען ניט "שטערן" אין דער הצלחה.

און דעריבער, אע"פ אז עס איז דא דער ענין הבחירה[44], וואס דערפאר איז דא (לכאורה) די מעגלעכקייט פון "ואם לא תאבה האשה גו" — עכ"ז איז אבער ברור, אז בפועל וועט זיך אפטאן[44] דער ענין, "ולקחת אשה לבני משם" — אז ס'וועט זיך געפינען אן אשה וועלכע וועט בוחר זיין צו גיין מיט אליעזרן[45].

And therefore, although there is the matter of free choice *(footnote 44: the Rambam, end of Hilchos Teshuvah ch. 6 — G-d "did not decree upon any particular person... each and every one... had he not wished...")* **— on account of which there is (seemingly) the possibility of "and if the woman does not wish..." — nevertheless it is certain that in actual fact the matter will be accomplished, "and you shall take a wife for my son from there" — that there will be found a woman who will choose to go with Eliezer** *(footnote 45: see the Chida's Pnei David on our parsha, §21). Note the precise formulation: not that her choice is overridden, but that a woman will be found who chooses. Free will is left intact at its own level; the certainty lives above it.*

DEEP DIVE

Bechirah and hatzlachah: how a gift from above leaves free will whole (footnotes 44, 49)

The Rambam (Hilchos Teshuvah 5:3) calls free choice "a great principle and the pillar of the Torah and the mitzvah," and in the passage footnote 44 cites (end of ch. 6) he insists G-d "did not decree upon any particular person" to be righteous or wicked. The sicha accepts this without qualification — Avraham's "if she does not wish" is real. How, then, is "you shall take a wife" certain? The answer is structural. Free choice operates within the ordered world of causes, where effort produces results and refusal blocks them. Hatzlachah, as section ה defined it, descends from above that order — from "mazal," where "the flow comes without delays and judgements." Something from that source is not one more cause competing with Rivkah's will; it is the condition under which a will like Rivkah's freely says "I will go." Footnote 49 names the mechanism from Likkutei Torah (Bamidbar 15a–b): G-d's conduct "(sometimes) to incline the hearts of people toward the good." The inclination does not replace the choice; it is the environment in which the choice is made.

Avraham's two sentences are therefore both true at their own levels. On the level of Eliezer's action and Rivkah's consent: she might refuse, and if she does, you are free. On the level of the source Avraham was invoking with "before you": it is certain that a woman will be found who chooses. The sicha's last two sections will say what makes a person a vessel for that second level — and why it matters for anyone whose work depends on other people's choices.

SUMMARY · SECTION 6

Avraham guaranteed "you shall take a wife" even though consent is free — and even while allowing "if she does not wish." Both are true: "before you" names a source above human effort and human will, so success from there is neither produced by striving nor blocked by refusal. Free choice stays whole; it is certain that a woman will be found who freely chooses to go.

"The conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs": the two conditions

BEFORE WE READ

The sicha now reaches the dictum the parsha is famous for: Rabbi Acha's "the conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs is finer before the Omnipresent than the Torah of the sons" (Rashi 24:42). The Rebbe proposes that the foregoing is one of its explanations. In "the Torah of the sons" — Torah and mitzvos as we fulfil them — the rule "everything is in the hands of heaven except the fear of heaven" (Berachos 33b) holds: free choice is never taken from a person. In Eliezer's mission, by contrast, success was secured from above even where it touched another person's free choice. That is what makes the servant's conversation "finer." But it comes with two conditions, read out of the phrase itself: one must be a *servant of the Patriarchs* — an eved with no existence of his own, whose whole being is his master's; and it must be *conversation* — "sichah is nothing but prayer" (Berachos 26b) — the clear recognition that one cannot rely on one's own powers. Through that total bittul one becomes a vessel for success in the "before you" mode.

7. It may be suggested that this is also one of the explanations *(footnote 46: the Ohr HaTorah on our parsha, 127b ff., explains the dictum at length in the way of Chassidus; this is an additional reading)* **of the Sages' statement (Rashi 24:42, from Bereishis Rabbah 60:8), "The conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs is finer... than the Torah of the sons" — because with regard to "the Torah of the sons" there is the rule that "everything is in the hands of heaven except the fear of heaven" (Berachos 33b): with regard to Torah and mitzvos, the matter of free choice is not taken away from a person; whereas in Eliezer's mission there was the conduct of "He will send His angel before you" in a manner of "and make your way successful" — the success was secured from above even where it touches on the matter of free choice** *(footnote 49: Likkutei Torah, Bamidbar 15a–b, on G-d's conduct "to incline the hearts of people toward the good")* **(because "finer... are the servants of the Patriarchs than the Torah...").** *"Finer" is given a precise sense: a mode of divine involvement that reaches further than the one governing ordinary Torah and mitzvos.*

ז. וי"ל אז דאס איז אויך איינער פון די ביאורים[46] אין דעם מאמר חז"ל[47] "יפה שיחתן של עבדי אבות . . מתורתן של בנים" — ווייל בנוגע צו "תורתן של בנים" איז דא דער כלל אז "הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים"[48], בנוגע צו תומ"צ ווערט ניט צוגענומען פון מענשן דער ענין הבחירה; משא"כ בשליחותו של אליעזר איז געווען די הנהגה פון "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" אין אן אופן פון "והצליח דרכך" — די הצלחה איז געווען פארזיכערט מלמעלה אפילו דארט וואו דאס רירט אן דעם ענין הבחירה[49] (ווייל "יפה . . עבדי אבות מתורתן כו").

But for this, two conditions are required: *— both drawn from the words of the dictum.*

נאר דערצו פאדערן זיך די צוויי תנאים:

(a) One must be "a servant of the Patriarchs" — a servant who is no existence unto himself at all,

(א) מ'זאל זיין "עבדי אבות" — אן עבד וואס איז ניט קיין מציאות בפני עצמו כלל,

ער האט א מציאות און א מציאות וואס טוט אויף ואפילו גדולות וכו', אבער כל מציאותו איז די מציאות האדון[50] (מה שקנה עבד קנה רבו[51]);

he has an existence, and an existence that accomplishes, even great things, etc. — but his whole existence is the existence of the master *(footnote 50: the Rebbe Rashab's maamar "U'mikneh rav" and those following it in Hemshech 5666, on the eved whose self is wholly the master's)* **("what a servant acquires, his master acquires," Pesachim 88b; Kiddushin 23b)** *— the halachic definition is the spiritual one: the servant's achievements are not his own, because he is not his own. Footnote 51 adds the Rashba's sharpening: it is acquired by the master from the outset, not transferred afterward.*

און (ב) דערצו דארף זיין דער ענין ה"שיחה" — "אין שיחה אלא תפלה"[52] — די הכרה ברורה אז מען קען זיך ניט פארלאזן אויף די אייגענע כחות, נאר מ'מוז מתפלל זיין צום אויבערשטן.

And (b) in addition there must be the matter of "conversation" — "sichah is nothing but prayer" (Berachos 26b) — the clear recognition that one cannot rely on one's own powers, but must pray to the Alm-ghty. *This is the inner dimension of section ג's bracket (footnote 18): G-d waited for Eliezer's prayer not because the prayer caused Rivkah's coming, but because the prayer made Eliezer the kind of agent through whom a pre-arranged success could pass.*

און דורך דעם ביטול מכל וכל איז מען א כלי[53] צו דער הנהגה פון "ישלח מלאכו לפניך ולקחת גו", בדרך הצלחה.

And through this bittul, utterly and completely, one is a vessel *(footnote 53: Hemshech 5672 vol. 2, p. 1124 — the passage on the gates of success, cited again)* **for the conduct of "He will send His angel before you and you shall take...," by way of hatzlachah.** *A vessel, not a cause. The two conditions do not earn the success; they remove what would obstruct it — the self that would claim the work and the self that would trust its own strength.*

DEEP DIVE

Eved and sichah: the anatomy of a vessel (footnotes 50–53)

The dictum "the conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs is finer than the Torah of the sons" has a long Chassidic career; the Ohr HaTorah's treatment (footnote 46) reads "servants" and "sons" as levels of the soul and of avodah. The sicha offers a complementary reading in which the dictum names a *mode of hashgachah* — and then extracts from its two nouns the two qualifications for it.

Eved. The halachah "what a servant acquires, his master acquires" (Pesachim 88b, Kiddushin 23b; VERIFIED) is cited as a description of consciousness. The Rebbe is careful: an eved is not a nonentity. "He has an existence, and an existence that accomplishes, even great things." Eliezer travelled, negotiated, gave gifts, argued with the family. What makes him an eved is that none of it is *his* — his whole existence is the master's. Hemshech 5666's "U'mikneh rav" (footnote 50) develops this: the servant's self-sense is entirely his master's self-sense.

Sichah. Berachos 26b (VERIFIED) derives Yitzchak's minchah from "Yitzchak went out to converse (לשוח) in the field" — "sichah is nothing but prayer." The sicha takes this as the second qualification: the lived recognition that one's own powers are not enough. Eliezer's prayer at the well is the model — he had every reason to expect success and prayed anyway.

Together they make a *keli*, a vessel. The image matters: a vessel does not generate what fills it, and it does not have to; it only has to be empty in the right shape. That is exactly the relationship "before you" implies between effort and outcome — and it is the bridge to section ח, where the vessel is the shliach.

SUMMARY · SECTION 7

"The servants' conversation is finer than the sons' Torah": in Torah and mitzvos, free choice is never overridden; in Eliezer's mission, success from above reached even into another's free choice. Two conditions: be an eved — accomplishing much, but owning nothing, wholly the master's; and sichah — pray, knowing your own powers do not suffice. That total bittul makes one a vessel for "before you" success.

The lesson for shluchim — and the promise at the end of galus

BEFORE WE READ

The sicha closes with the horaah, and it is addressed by name to shluchim. If the servants' conversation is higher than the sons' Torah, it is nevertheless *written into* the sons' Torah — a whole parsha of it — which means the sons can reach it. The Rebbe then describes a real temptation: the shliach who accepts total responsibility for his *effort* but disclaims responsibility for *results*, because the other person is a free agent who cannot be forced. The sicha's answer is Eliezer's. Put yourself in the posture of "a servant of the Patriarchs" — complete bittul, as a servant to his master — and pray for success; then you are assured of "He will send His angel before you" and "He will make your way successful," through the whole mission, and the result is that "you shall take a wife" — Knesses Yisrael, returned to her Husband — one Jew at a time, until each becomes a lamp that lights others. The final line is the Rambam's: free choice is a great principle, and yet "the Torah has already promised that Israel will do teshuvah at the end of their exile and immediately be redeemed."

8. Although "the conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs" is higher than "the Torah of the sons" — nevertheless "the conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs" is (also) set within "the Torah of the sons"; it is an entire parsha in their Torah. *Rashi's own proof of the dictum — "the parsha of Eliezer is doubled in the Torah" — is turned into its application: the higher thing has been written down where the sons can read it.*

ח. אע"פ אז "שיחתן של עבדי אבות" איז העכער פון "תורתן של בנים" — איז אבער (אויך) "שיחתן של עבדי אבות" אריינגעשטעלט אין "תורתן של בנים", ס'איז א פרשה שלימה בתורתן.

From this itself it is understood that the sons, too, can attain the quality of (— "become") "servants of the Patriarchs."

וואס דערפון גופא איז פארשטאנדיק, אז אויך די בנים קענען דערגרייכן די מעלה פון (— "ווערן") "עבדי אבות".

And this is the practical directive one takes from "the parsha of Eliezer" — and especially for those who have merited to be engaged in the shlichus of the "Patriarchs" of each and every generation — our Rebbeim, our Nesi'im — in the work of strengthening Yiddishkeit and spreading Torah (including — "your wellsprings shall spread outward"): *The sicha names its audience. "Patriarchs of every generation" are the Rebbeim; their "servants" are shluchim; and the mission is Eliezer's mission transposed.*

און דאס איז די הוראה בפועל וואס מען נעמט ארויס פון "פרשה של אליעזר" — ובמיוחד פאר די וועלכע האבן זוכה געווען צו עוסק זיין זיך בשליחותם של ה"אבות" שבכל דור ודור — רבותינו נשיאינו — אין דער עבודה פון החזקת היהדות והרבצת התורה (כולל — יפוצו מעינותיך חוצה):

עמ' 105 עס זיינען פאראן אזעלכע וואס מיינען אז די דאזיקע שליחות באשטייט בלויז אין דעם טאן, אבער בנוגע די תוצאות פון זייערע פעולות — זיינען זיי כלל ניט קיין בעה"ב. דער שליח איז מסכים אז ער דארף זיין איבערגעגעבן צו דער שליחות "בכל כחו"[54], ביז ער האט ניט קיין מנוחת הנפש, ניט ער און ניט בני ביתו, זייענדיק טרוד כל היום במילוי השליחות;

There are those who think that this shlichus consists only in the doing, but as for the results of their actions — over those they are not masters at all. The shliach agrees that he must be devoted to the shlichus "with all his strength" *(footnote 54: a fortiori from a hired worker in ordinary matters, who owes his employer his full strength — Rambam, end of Hilchos Sechirus; Tur and Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat §337; the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, Hilchos She'eilah u'Sechirus §20)* **— to the point that he has no peace of mind, neither he nor his household, being occupied all day in fulfilling the shlichus;** *the Rebbe describes the devoted shliach with evident respect before naming where the posture falls short.*

אבער אויף דעם צווייטן (אויף וועמען ער זוכט משפיע זיין) איז ער ניט קיין בעה"ב. יענער איז א בעל בחירה, און מען קען אים ניט מכריח זיין צו פירן זיך היפך רצונו (הגלוי)!

but over the other person (on whom he seeks to have an influence) he is not master. That one is a possessor of free choice, and one cannot compel him to conduct himself contrary to his (revealed) will! *The parenthesis "revealed" is the opening the sicha will walk through: the other's manifest will is not the whole of him.*

אויף דעם נעמט מען די הוראה פון פרשה של אליעזר, אז בשעת מ'שטעלט זיך אריין אין א מצב פון "עבדי אבות" — א ביטול מכל וכל, ווי אן עבד לאדונו, און דערצו איז מען מתפלל להקב"ה אויף הצלחה במילוי שליחותו — איז מען מובטח אז "ה' . . ישלח מלאכו לפניך" און "והצליח דרכך":

To this one takes the directive from the parsha of Eliezer: that when one places oneself in the state of "servants of the Patriarchs" — a bittul utterly and completely, like a servant to his master — and in addition one prays to the Holy One, blessed be He, for success in fulfilling one's shlichus — one is assured that "Hashem... will send His angel before you" and "will make your way successful": *the two conditions of section ד, now as a working instruction.*

דער אויבערשטער פארזיכערט אים הצלחה בשליחותו [ובמשך דער גאנצער שליחות: סיי בהליכתו, סיי במקום השליחות גופא, און סיי אומקערנדיק זיך פון מקום השליחות (הפרט המסוים הזה שבה)[55]]

The Alm-ghty guarantees him success in his shlichus [and throughout the entire shlichus: in his going, in the place of the shlichus itself, and in returning from the place of the shlichus (this particular detail of it)] *— footnote 55: as with Eliezer, whose return was also arranged without delay (footnote 27), and who in Aram said "let me go to my master" and on arriving said "he is my master" — which is why Rashi (24:66) quotes the word "the servant" from the verse: Eliezer remained an eved at every stage, and so did the hashgachah.*

— און "ולקחת אשה" — זו כנסת ישראל — און מ'קערט איר אום "לאישה" הקב"ה

— and "you shall take a wife" — this is Knesses Yisrael — and one returns her "to her Husband," the Holy One, blessed be He, *the marriage of Yitzchak and Rivkah read, as the Midrashim read it, as the union of Israel and G-d; the shliach's work is the matchmaker's.*

דורך מעורר זיין נאך אן אידן און נאך אן אידן ולהאירו ביז צו מאכן דעם אידן א "נר להאיר", א שליח פון אבינו שבשמים.

by awakening yet another Jew and yet another Jew and illuminating him, until one makes that Jew into "a lamp to give light," a shliach of our Father in heaven. *The result of a successful shlichus is not a recipient but another shliach — the servant makes servants.*

And as the Rambam rules (that although the matter of free choice is "a great principle" and "the pillar of the Torah and the mitzvah" (Hilchos Teshuvah 5:3) — nevertheless): "The Torah has already promised that Israel will ultimately do teshuvah at the end of their exile, and immediately they are redeemed" (Hilchos Teshuvah 7:5). *The sicha's thesis stated at its largest scale. Teshuvah is the freest of all acts, and the redemption depends on it; and yet it is promised — because the promise comes from "before you," above the level at which choices are made, and is certain to be freely fulfilled.*

וכפסק דין הרמב"ם (אז אע"פ אז דער ענין הבחירה איז אן "עיקר גדול" און "עמוד התורה והמצוה"[56] — איז): וכבר[57] הבטיחה תורה שסוף ישראל לעשות תשובה בסוף גלותן ומיד הן נגאלין.

(From the sichos of Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah 5742, and 20 Marcheshvan 5744)

(משיחות ש"פ חיי שרה תשמ"ב, כ' מרחשון תשד"מ)

DEEP DIVE

"With all his strength" — the shliach as poel (footnote 54)

Footnote 54 grounds the shliach's obligation in the halachah of the hired worker. The Rambam (end of Hilchos Sechirus) rules that just as the employer is warned not to withhold the worker's wage, the worker is warned not to rob the employer of his labour — he must work "with all his strength," citing Yaakov's "with all my strength I served your father." The Tur and Shulchan Aruch (Choshen Mishpat end of §337) and the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch (Hilchos She'eilah u'Sechirus §20) codify it. The sicha reasons a fortiori: if a worker in a merely permitted matter owes his employer his whole strength, how much more a shliach in the work of heaven. The Rebbe does not dispute the devoted shliach's self-description; he grants it fully — and then says it is not enough, because it stops at effort.

DEEP DIVE

Teshuvah is free, and redemption is promised (footnotes 56–57)

The sicha ends on a juxtaposition inside the Rambam. Hilchos Teshuvah 5:3: free choice "is a great principle and the pillar of the Torah and the mitzvah." Hilchos Teshuvah 7:5 (VERIFIED): "All the prophets commanded concerning teshuvah, and Israel are redeemed only through teshuvah; and the Torah has already promised that Israel will ultimately do teshuvah at the end of their exile and immediately they are redeemed." If teshuvah is a free act, how can it be promised? The sicha's eight sections are the answer: a promise issued from "before you" is not a prediction about how choices will fall out; it is a guarantee from a source above the level of choice, certain to be fulfilled *through* free choice — as Avraham's "you shall take a wife" was fulfilled through Rivkah's freely spoken "I will go." Read this way, the Rambam's two halachos are Avraham's two sentences to Eliezer: "if she does not wish, you are released" and "you shall take a wife from there" — both true, at their own levels.

SUMMARY · SECTION 8

The servants' conversation is written into the sons' Torah, so the sons can become servants. Horaah for shluchim: the shliach who gives all his strength but disclaims results — "the other is a free agent" — has stopped at effort. Stand as an eved, pray for success, and you are assured "before you" success through the whole mission, until the other Jew becomes a lamp and a shliach himself. The Rambam: free choice is the pillar of Torah — and the Torah has promised Israel will do teshuvah and be redeemed.

FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE · CHAYEI SARAH

The angel who went first

A dvar Torah drawn from Likkutei Sichos vol. 25, Chayei Sarah ב. Six to eight minutes between courses.

Avraham sends Eliezer to find a wife for Yitzchak, and Eliezer asks the only question that matters: what if she won't come? Avraham's answer is a promise. "Hashem will send His angel *before you*, and you will take a wife for my son from there." Not "may send," not "will help" — *before you*, and *you will take*.

Later in the parsha Eliezer stands in Besuel's house and retells the whole story. And he changes one word. "Avraham told me," he says, "Hashem will send His angel *with you*." Before has become with. The Rebbe asks: why? And why is Rashi — who three parshiyos earlier made a point of the difference between Noach, who walked *with* G-d, and Avraham, who walked *before* Him — silent about it here?

The answer the Rebbe gives is that Rashi has already handed us the key. An angel *with* you is an escort. The trip is yours, the talking is yours, the risk is yours, and heaven helps. An angel *before* you is something else: he has already been there. The outcome was arranged before you left the house. You still make the journey — but you are walking into a result, not producing one.

> *Look at how the story actually goes. Eliezer arrives at the well and before he has finished praying, Rivkah is already walking toward him. When Besuel tries to block the match, he is simply removed from the scene. And when the family finally asks Rivkah whether she will go — a girl no one has consulted, to a man she has never seen — she answers in one word: "I will go." Rashi adds: of my own accord, even if you do not want me to.*

At no point in this story does Eliezer's effort produce the result. Everything was waiting for him.

So why did he tell Besuel "with you"? Because he was asking Besuel for consent, and you cannot ask a man for consent while telling him the matter has been settled over his head. He said "with you" — the angel helped me — and then slipped the truth back in through a side door, adding a phrase Avraham never said: "*and He will make your way successful*." Success, the Rebbe says, is the same thing as "before you." Success isn't what you earn by working; the Gemara calls that "I toiled and I found." Success is what G-d gives — a gift that doesn't come through your effort at all. Besuel heard it. His reply was: "The thing has come from Hashem; we cannot say to you bad or good."

Now the hard question, the one Eliezer asked at the start. A bride's consent is free will. The Rambam calls free will the pillar of the whole Torah. How could Avraham *promise* it? And the Rebbe's answer is the center of the sicha: "before you" names a place that is above the level where effort and will operate. From there, success doesn't need your effort to bring it about — and another person's will can't block it either. Rivkah was never forced. She chose, freely, with her own mouth. It was simply certain, from above, that a woman would be found who would choose.

The Sages say the conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs is finer than the Torah of the sons. The Rebbe reads that literally: in our Torah and mitzvos, free will is never overridden — "everything is in the hands of heaven except the fear of heaven." In Eliezer's mission, heaven reached even there. But two conditions are written into the phrase. You have to be a *servant* — Eliezer did enormous things, but none of it was his; "what a servant acquires, his master acquires." And it has to be *conversation*, which the Gemara says means prayer — Eliezer, with every reason to expect success, stopped at the well and prayed anyway. Total bittul. That is what makes a person a vessel, and a vessel doesn't have to produce what fills it. It only has to be the right shape.

And then the Rebbe turns to the room. This sicha was said to shluchim. There are shluchim, he says, who will give everything — "with all their strength," no rest for them or their families — and who will tell you, with complete sincerity, that results are not up to them. The other person has free will. You can't make anyone do anything. The Rebbe's answer is that this is Eliezer's situation exactly, and Eliezer was promised results. Put yourself in the posture of a servant of the Patriarchs — of the Rebbeim, the Patriarchs of every generation. Pray. And the promise is "He will send His angel *before* you" — through the whole mission, the going, the being there, and the coming home — until the Jew you went to find becomes a lamp that lights other Jews.

The last line is the Rambam. Free will is the pillar of the Torah, he says in chapter five. And in chapter seven: the Torah has already promised that Israel will do teshuvah at the end of their exile, and immediately be redeemed. Both are true. One is "with you." The other is "before you."

IN AVODAH · THIS WEEK

1. **Name the mission.** Pick the one thing you are working at this week whose outcome depends on someone else's decision — a child, a student, a friend you are trying to bring closer, a person you have invited.
2. **Do the Eliezer thing at the well.** Before the conversation, stop and ask Hashem for hatzlachah in it — out loud or in your own words. Not because you have no plan, but because the plan is not what makes it work.
3. **Check which word you are using.** "With me" sounds like: *I'll try my best; the rest is up to them.* "Before me" sounds like: *this has been arranged; my job is to show up as a servant and not get in the way.* Notice which one you actually believe, and say the second one once.
4. **Give first, ask afterward.** Eliezer handed Rivkah the gifts before he knew her name. Find one act of giving you can do this week before you know how it will be received.

Glossary

לפניך / אתך	"Before you" / "with you." The two prepositions whose difference the sicha turns on: an angel going ahead to secure the outcome versus an angel accompanying and assisting the effort.
סעד לתומכו	"Support to hold him up." Rashi's phrase (Bereishis 6:9) for Noach's relationship to G-d — help that props up an effort that remains one's own. The sicha uses it to define "with you."
הצלחה	Hatzlachah, success. Defined here as what G-d gives rather than what effort earns; traced in Ohr HaTorah to mazal, a source above the chain of cause and effect, "from where the flow comes without delays and judgements."
יגעתי ומצאתי	"I toiled and I found" (Megillah 6b). A find disproportionate to the toil — but still drawn by it. The sicha places hatzlachah above this.
מזל	Mazal. In Chassidus, the soul's root above the ordered worlds (seder hishtalshelus); the source of hatzlachah.
בחירה	Bechirah, free choice. The Rambam's "great principle, pillar of the Torah and the mitzvah." Never overridden in Torah and mitzvos ("everything is in the hands of heaven except the fear of heaven"); yet a "before you" success is fulfilled through it without being blocked by it.
יפה שיחתן של עבדי אבות	"The conversation of the servants of the Patriarchs is finer than the Torah of the sons" (Rashi 24:42, Bereishis Rabbah 60:8). Read here as naming a mode of hashgachah that reaches into another's free choice — with two conditions drawn from its words.
עבד	Eved, servant. "What a servant acquires, his master acquires": one who accomplishes, even greatly, but whose whole existence is the master's. The first condition.
שיחה	Sichah, conversation — "sichah is nothing but prayer" (Berachos 26b). The recognition that one's own powers do not suffice. The second condition.
ביטול	Bittul. Self-nullification; here "utterly and completely," which makes one a keli, a vessel.
כלי	Keli, vessel. What receives without producing. The sicha's word for the agent of a "before you" success.
שליח / שליחות	Shliach, shlichus. Agent, mission. The sicha's addressees: those engaged in the shlichus of the Rebbeim, "the Patriarchs of every generation."
בעל הבית	Baal habayis. Master, owner. The shliach who is "not master over results" is the posture the sicha corrects.
פשוטו של מקרא (פשש"מ)	The plain sense of Scripture — the level on which the sicha, and Rashi, operate.
הוראה	Horaah. Practical directive — the sicha's closing section.
כנסת ישראל	Knesses Yisrael. The collective soul of Israel, "the wife" returned to her Husband.

נר להאיר	"A lamp to give light." The Jew who has been awakened until he lights others.
הפצת המעיינות / יפוצו מעינותיך חוצה	"Your wellsprings shall spread outward" — the spreading of Chassidus, named as part of the shlichus.

APPARATUS

Footnotes as printed

All 57 footnotes of Likkutei Sichos vol. 25, pp. 99–105, reproduced as printed, with the three starred sub-notes (to fns 23, 25, 42) set beneath their notes. VERIFIED = opened and confirmed, or a readily checkable Chumash/Rashi/Talmud reference (32). AS CITED = reproduced from the printed apparatus, internal locator not independently opened (25). "שם" and "פרשתנו" follow the printing's own conventions (Bereishis ch. 24 unless stated).

1) כד, ד. VERIFIED

2) שם, ה. VERIFIED

3) שם ו־ז. VERIFIED

4) שם, לג ואילך. VERIFIED

5) שם, מ. VERIFIED

6) כן הקשה גם באלשיך פרשתנו (שם, לג השאלה הז'). ותירוצו שרמז בזה שהמלאך טפל אליו (ע"ש) — לכאורה הוא ע"ד הדרוש (ענינו דס' האלשיך), ואינו ע"ד הפשט. AS CITED

7) ראה רד"ק פרשתנו (שם, לט): ובשנות הדברים האלה יש בהם שינוי מלות אבל הטעם אחד. AS CITED

8) ר"פ נח. VERIFIED

9) וגם האברבנאל (בפרשתנו) שעמד על כו"כ שינויים בין דברי אליעזר ודברי אברהם — לא עמד על שינוי זה. AS CITED

10) ובפרט שהשינוי ל"אתך" הוא באותו הפסוק שבו השינוי בין נח לאברהם (שרש"י מבאר בר"פ נח). VERIFIED

11) ראה גם בחיי פרשתנו (שם, טו): כי המלאך קדם לפניו כו'. וראה ב"ר פנ"ט, י וברד"ל (ועוד) שם. AS CITED

12) פרשתנו שם, י־יא. VERIFIED

13) פרשתנו שם, טו. וכמ"ש בבחיי שם. VERIFIED

14) שם, יב ואילך. VERIFIED

15) ד"טרם" פירושו "עד לא" (רש"י בראשית ב, ה. וראה בארוכה במפרשים שם). AS CITED

16) במדרש (ב"ר פ"ס, ד) איתא, שאליעזר נענה "במענה פיו", וי"ל שזהו בכללות, אבל כשנענה באופן ד"טרם כלה לדבר" ה"ז יותר על הנ"ל, מעלה נעלית יותר (ראה לקו"ש ח"כ (ע' 91; 98 ואילך) וש"נ), אבל בפשש"מ — הרי זוהי הוכחה שאינה תוצאה מהתפילה. וכפשטות הענין שיציאת רבקה מביתה היתה לפני שהתחיל להתפלל [ומ"ש רש"י (לקמן פסוק סו) "ושנזדמנה לו רבקה בתפלתו" — אין הכוונה שפעל זה ע"י התפלה, כ"א שהיתה הצלחה, קרה נס "ושנזדמנה לו רבקה ב(אמצע) תפלתו"]. AS CITED

17) שם, מב. וכן בפרש"י שם, סו. VERIFIED

18) ראה לקמן סעיף ז בפנימיות הענינים. VERIFIED

19) לי הכתוב — שם, מד. VERIFIED

20) רש"י שם, נה. VERIFIED

21) שם, נה. VERIFIED

22) שם, נז־נח. VERIFIED

23) שהרי בפשטות לא היתה נוכחת בעת דיבורו של אליעזר עם בתואל*, וכמפורש (בנוגע לדיבורו אח"כ עם אחי' ואמה) "נקרא לנערה ונשאלה גו'". וכמובן גם בפשטות, שכשמדברים בענין הכי חשוב לא יקראו לנערה בת ג' (אף שהיתה אז בת דעת — ראה לקו"ש ח"י ע' 69 ואילך) — ושתצא מבית אמא (ראה פרשתנו שם, כח ובפרש"י) — ובפרט שלא ידעו (עדיין) שאודותה מדובר! וראה שוה"ג להערה 25.

ועוד זאת: מפרש"י עה"פ "ונשאלה את פי'" — "מכאן שאין משיאין את האשה אלא מדעתה" [היינו, שלשיטת רש"י שאלוה אז (לא רק אם תלך מיד, כ"א) על כללות השידוך (וכמ"ש באברבנאל פרשתנו (שאלה הי"ח) ועוד. וראה לקו"ש שם ע' 65 ואילך)] — משמע, שגם בתואל כו' לא דיבר עמה עדיין אודות השידוך.

*) ומש"נ (שם, נא) "הנה רבקה לפניך קח ולך גו'" הוא רק הבעת הסכמה (כדמוכח מאמרו "קח ולך" — והרי לא לקחה כו' עדיין). AS CITED

24) דפשיטא שאין זה טעם מספיק להסכים על שידוך, ולילך עם איש זר, והיפך רצון אחי' ואמה! VERIFIED

25) שם, כב (אצל הבאר). שם, נג (לאחרי דיבורו עם בתואל*).

*) אבל אין להוכיח מזה גופא שהיתה נוכחת בעת אריכות הדיבור של אליעזר שלפנ"ז — כי נתינת המתנות היתה בהפסק זמן, וכדמוכח ממש"נ "ומגדנות נתן לאחי' ולאמה" ולא נזכר בתואל, שבפשטות זהו לפי שזה הי' לאחרי ש"בא מלאך והמיתו" [ומה שרש"י כותב זה רק לאח"ז עה"פ "ויאמר אחי' ואמה" — כי מנתינת המתנות לחוד אין הכרח שכבר מת (כמשנ"ת בלקו"ש שם הערה 9); אבל לאחרי שפרש"י ש"בא מלאך והמיתו" מסתבר לומר, דגם אי הזכרת בתואל לפנ"ז — הוא מאותו הטעם]. AS CITED

26) ומתורצת קושיית התוס' עה"ת (הדר זקנים) על פרש"י "וכי היתה רבקה כ"כ פרוצה ללכת בלא רשות אחי' ואמה" — כי זה נפעל ע"י המלאך, ההצלחה מהוי'. וראה לקמן סעיף ו. AS CITED

27) ולהעיר שגם בחזרתם אל בית אברהם, סיבב הקב"ה כך ד"ויצא יצחק לשוח בשדה גו' ותשא רבקה את עיניי' ותרא את יצחק גו'" (פרשתנו שם, סג־סד) — בלי שהיות כו'. VERIFIED

28) להעיר מפרשה שלפנינו (וירא יח, יג — ובפרש"י ומפרשיו) ואכ"מ. AS CITED

29) ואין להקשות איך אמר אליעזר בשם אברהם דבר שלא אמרו — כי נוסף שמפורש בפרש"י הטעם (וההיתר) שאליעזר "שינה הסדר . . שלא יתפשוהו בדבריו" (כדלקמן בפנים), הרי בנדו"ד מלכתחילה לא הי' ענין של שינוי, כ"א רק שלא סיפר כל הענין [כי "ישלח מלאכו לפניך" כולל ג"כ שישלח מלאכו אתו לסייע אותו בכל פעולותיו, כמובן בפשטות. וראה גם בחיי שבהערה 11]. ויומתק יותר ע"פ המבואר לקמן סעיף ה. AS CITED

30) פרשתנו שם, כב־כג. VERIFIED

31) שם, מז. VERIFIED

32) לי' רש"י שם, כג. וברש"י שם, כא: משתומם ומתבהל על שראה דברו קרוב להצליח. AS CITED

33) שם, מב. VERIFIED

34) ראה אוה"ת וישב רעח, א־ב (ושם כרך ז תתתלט, ב). AS CITED

35) וישב לט, ב־ג. שם, כג (וראה בארוכה לקמן ע' 212 ואילך). VERIFIED

36) פרשתנו שם, נו. ועד"ז שם, כא. לשון רש"י שבהערה 32. ועוד. ובאוה"ת שם: ענין ההצלחה נזכר באליעזר . . ונז' שם כמה פעמים. AS CITED

37) מגילה ו, ריש ע"ב. VERIFIED

38) ראה גם לקו"ש חי"ג ס"ע 117 ואילך. AS CITED

39) ראה אוה"ת שם "כי הצלחה הוא ענין מזל". ע"ש וראה לקו"ש חי"ט ע' 384 ואילך בענין "שערי הצלחה" (ע"פ המשך תער"ב ח"ב ע' א'קכג ואילך). AS CITED

40) פרשתנו שם, מה. VERIFIED

41) שם, נ. VERIFIED

42) ע"פ המבואר באוה"ת שם "ששורש ההצלחה ממזלא . . שמשם בא השפע במהירות בלי עיכובים ודינים" — יומתק המשך לשון בקשת אליעזר "אל תאחרו אותי והוי* הצליח דרכי". [ומה שאמרו "ונשאלה את פי" (ולא הסכימו תיכף) — כי לאחר שלא הסכים אליעזר ליתן זמן לרבקה "לפרנס את עצמה בתכשיטים" אע"פ ש"לא יעשה כן", כי "נותנין לבתולה כו'" (רש"י שם, נה) — הי' אצלם ספק באמיתיות דברי אליעזר (בארוכה — בלקו"ש חי"י ע' 68)].

*) עפ"ז יומתק אמרו "והוי" — ד"כ"מ שנאמר וה' הוא ובית דינו" (רש"י וירא יט, כד) — דגם הב"ד שלמעלה הצליח דרכו, ובמילא "בא השפע . . בלי עיכובים ודינים". AS CITED

43) פרשתנו שם, ח. VERIFIED

44) להעיר ממ"ש הרמב"ם (הל' תשובה ספי"ו) "שלא גזר על איש פלוני . . כל אחד ואחד . . אילו לא רצה כו'". AS CITED

45) להעיר מפני דוד (להחיד"א) פרשתנו אות כא. AS CITED

46) ראה בארוכה ביאור מחז"ל זה ע"ד החסידות — אוה"ת פרשתנו קכז, ב ואילך. ועוד. AS CITED

47) רש"י פרשתנו שם, מב (מב"ר פ"ס, ח. ושם: עבדי בתי אבות). VERIFIED

48) ברכות לג, ב. וש"נ. VERIFIED

49) ראה לקו"ת במדבר (טו, א־ב. וש"נ) אודות הנהגת הקב"ה (לפעמים) "להטות לב בני אדם לטובה". ע"ש. AS CITED

50) ראה בארוכה ד"ה ומקנה רב (ומאמרים שלאח"ז) בהמשך תרס"ו. AS CITED

51) פסחים פח, ב. קידושין כג, ב. וראה רשב"א קידושין שם, שמלכתחילה נקנה לרבו. VERIFIED

52) ברכות כו, ב. ע"ז ז, ב. וראה אוה"ת פרשתנו קכט, א ואילך. VERIFIED

53) להעיר גם מהמשך תער"ב ח"ב ע' א'קכד (נעתק בלקו"ש שבהערה 39 הערה 40). AS CITED

54) במכש"כ מפועל בעניני הרשות (רמב"ם סוף הל' שכירות. טושו"ע חו"מ סו"ס שלו. שו"ע אדה"ז שם הל' שאלה ושכירות כו' סעיף כ. וראה לקמן ע' 139 ואילך). AS CITED

55) ראה הערה 27. — והרי גם בחזרת אליעזר מארם אמר "ואלכה לאדני" ובבואו לא"י "ויאמר העבד הוא אדוני". ועפ"ז מתורץ העתקת רש"י מהפסוק גם תיבת "העבד" (לקמן כד, סו). AS CITED

56) רמב"ם הל' תשובה פ"ה ה"ג. VERIFIED

57) שם פ"ז ה"ה. VERIFIED

Method and colophon

Text fidelity

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Verification performed for this edition

Opened and confirmed: Rashi on Bereishis 6:9, 24:42, 24:47, 24:55, 24:58; Megillah 6b (יגעתי ומצאתי); Berachos 26b (אין שיחה אלא תפלה); Berachos 33b (הכל בידי שמים); Rambam Hilchos Teshuvah 7:5. Chumash references in Bereishis 24 and 39 are treated as readily checkable. Ohr HaTorah, Hemshech 5666, Hemshech 5672, Likkutei Torah, the Alshich, Radak, Abarbanel, Bachya, Pnei David, Hadar Zekeinim and the halachic sources in fn 54 are reproduced AS CITED.

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