

DEVARIM

VA'ETHANAN

EIKEV

RE'EH

SHOFTIM

KI TEITZEI

KI TAVO

NITZAVIM

VAYEILEKH

HA'AZINU

VEZOT HA-BERAKHAH

DEVASH

דְּבָרִים DEVARIM

Because learning Torah is sweet

HADAR
Children & Families

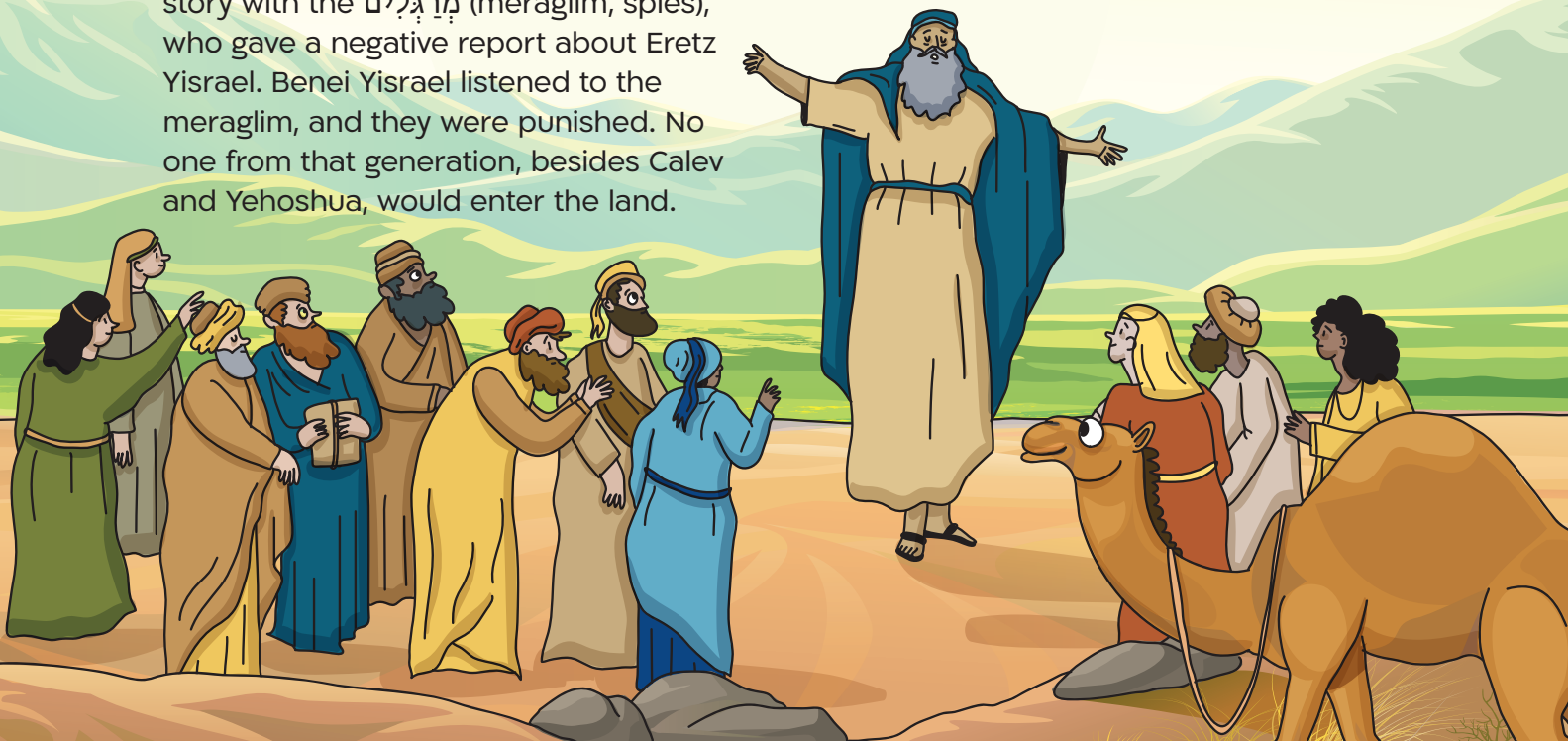
VOLUME
ISSUE 44

ב' - ח' אב תשפ"ה July 27 - August 2, 2025



מה בפַּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- ◆ In the 40th year of wandering in the מִדְבָּר (midbar, wilderness), Benei Yisrael are almost ready to enter Eretz Yisrael. Moshe gives a long speech, reminding the people of their journey after leaving Har Sinai.
- ◆ Moshe retells the story of how he needed help to judge Benei Yisrael's questions and legal cases, so he appointed judges to govern the people with him.
- ◆ Moshe reminds Benei Yisrael of the story with the מְרַגְלִים (meraglim, spies), who gave a negative report about Eretz Yisrael. Benei Yisrael listened to the meraglim, and they were punished. No one from that generation, besides Calev and Yehoshua, would enter the land.
- ◆ God tells Moshe that Benei Yisrael should not fight against Se'ir, the descendants of Esav, nor should they fight against Moav and Ammon, the descendants of Lot.
- ◆ Benei Yisrael defeat the armies of Sihon and Og. Their land, east of the Jordan River, is given to the שֵׁבְטִים (shevatim, tribes) of Reuven, Gad, and some of Menasheh. Moshe reminds these shevatim that they must cross into Eretz Yisrael and fight with the rest of Benei Yisrael, before settling there.





מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash

First, God tells Moshe to go fight a war with Sihon. Then, right away, Moshe asks Sihon to make peace! What's going on here? Is Moshe disobeying God?

Bzzzz
A lot of midrashim are
bugged by something
unusual in the Torah text



Devarim 2:24-26

See, I [God] give into your power Sihon the Emori, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin inheriting; start a war...

Then I [Moshe] sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedeimot to King Sihon of Heshbon with an offer of peace, as follows...

דברים ב:כד-כו

רָאָה נָתַתִּי בְיָדְךָ אֶת סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ־
חֶשְׁבֹן הָאֱמֹרִי וְאֶת אֶרְצוֹ הַחֵל
רֶשׁ וְהִתְגַּדַּר בּוֹ מִלְחָמָה...

וְאֶשְׁלַח מַלְאָכִים מִמִּדְבַּר קִדְמוֹת
אֶל־סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ חֶשְׁבֹן דִּבְרִי
שְׁלוֹם לֵאמֹר:

Midrash Tanhuma

"Turn from evil and do good, seek out peace and chase after it" (Tehillim 34:15).

The Torah does not command us to go chasing after the mitzvot. Instead, it says:

"**When** you find a bird's nest..." (Devarim 22:6),

"**When** you encounter your enemy's ox..." (Shemot 23:4),

"**When** you see your enemy's donkey..." (Shemot 23:5)...

If these situations come up, you have a mitzvah to act, but you don't have to go chasing after them.

But in the case of peace, the verse from Tehillim teaches to "seek out peace," wherever you are, and "chase after it," wherever else it may be.

This is what Benei Yisrael did. Although the Holy Blessed One said, "begin inheriting, start a war," they chased after peace.

מדרש תנחומא חקת כב

"סור מרע ועשה טוב בקש שלום ורדפהו" (תהלים ל:טו).

לֹא פָקְדָה הַתּוֹרָה לְרִדֹּף אַחֵר
הַמִּצְוֹת. אֲלֵא:

כִּי יִקְרָא קוֹן צִפּוֹר לִפְנִיָּה (דברים
כב:ו),

כִּי תִפְגַּע שׁוֹר אוֹיְבֶךָ (שמות כג:ד),

כִּי תִרְאֶה חֲמֹר שֹׁנֵאָה (שמות
כג:ה)...

כָּלֶם, אִם בָּאוּ לִידְךָ, אֲתָה מִצְוָה
עָלֶיךָ, וְלֹא לְרִדֹּף אַחֲרֶיךָ.

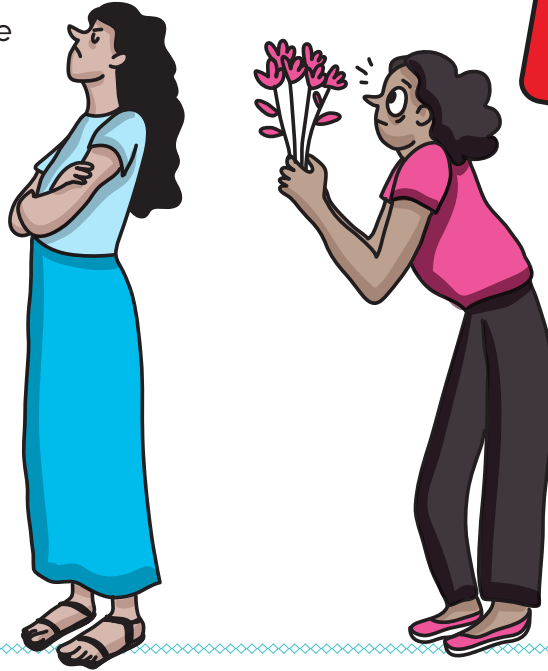
וְהַשְׁלוֹם, "בִּקְשׁ שְׁלוֹם" בְּמִקוֹמְךָ,
וְרִדְפֵהוּ בְּמִקוֹם אַחֵר.

וְכֹן עָשׂוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל. אִף עַל פִּי שְׁאֵמַר
לָהֶם הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, "הַחֵל
רֶשׁ וְהִתְגַּדַּר בּוֹ מִלְחָמָה," רִדְפוּ אֶת
הַשְׁלוֹם.

- ◆ Look up the three mitzvot (other than peace) mentioned in this midrash. Why wouldn't it make sense to go around looking for opportunities to perform these mitzvot?
- ◆ How do you understand the idea of chasing after peace? Can you list ways a person could chase after peace in both "big" situations (like peace between nations), and "small" situations (like peace between neighbors)?
- ◆ Did Moshe actually disobey God by first asking Sihon for peace?



Send us your thoughts or questions from learning the parashah. We'll write back to you, and some will get published in future issues of Devash!
Write to us at devash@hadar.org



פְּרָשְׁנוֹת • Commentary



Devarim 1:16

I commanded your judges at that time as follows, "**Hear between** your brothers, and judge fairly between people, and brothers, and strangers."

דברים א:טז

וְאָצִיָּה אֶת שְׁפִטֵיכֶם בְּעֵת הַהוּא
לֵאמֹר שְׁמַע בֵּין אֶחֱיֶיךָ וּשְׁפֹטֵהֶם
צֶדֶק בֵּין אִישׁ וּבֵין אָחִיו וּבֵין גֵּרֹ:

What is the meaning of the words שְׁמַע בֵּין (shamoa bein, hear between)?

Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 7b says

Rabbi Hanina says this is a warning to a court that it may not hear the statement of one litigant before the other litigant comes, and it is a warning to litigants that they may not explain their case to a judge before the other litigant arrives.

Litigant

A person involved in a court case

TALMUD Bavli



תלמוד בבלי סנהדרין דף ז עמוד ב

אמר רבי חנינא אזהרה לבית דין שלא לשמע דברי בעל דין קדם שיבא בעל דין חברו, ואזהרה לבעל דין שלא יטעים דבריו לדין קדם שיבא בעל דין חברו.

Interesting. Here's what Or Ha-Hayyim says:

OR Ha-Hayyim
Morocco
300 years ago



אור החיים

I heard from the wise, pious, and great R. Moshe Berdugo, that he would be careful when judging a case to only look downwards. He felt that if he looked at either one of the litigants, it would confuse the other (because it would feel like they're not getting the same attention). This is how he understood "Hear between your brothers"—that judges should only use hearing.

ושמעתי מפי חכם גדול חסיד וגדול בישראל חביב עלי כרוחי הרב ר' משה בירדוגו זכרונו לחיי העולם הבא, שהיה מדקדק בשעת הדין שיהיו עיניו למטה, ולא היה נושא עיניו כל עקר. ושהיה מרגיש שאם היה נושא עיניו לצד ההכרח באיזה אחד מבעלי הדין היה מתבלבל שפגגדו, והוא אמרו "שמע בין אחיכם" - שלא יעשו אלא השמיעה.

- ◆ When you read the words in the pasuk, what do you think is the פשוט (peshat), the most literal or straightforward meaning?
- ◆ Both Rabbi Hanina and Or Ha-Hayyim think these words teach a lesson for courts, about how to be fair. What's the difference between their approaches?
- ◆ It's possible that the difference between these interpretations is that one focuses on "shamoa" and one focuses on "bein." Which would be which?





הלכה • Halakhah



The Torah has a vision for fairness and law to govern all of human society, so people don't take the law into their own hands. In our parashah, Moshe talks about how he appointed judges for this purpose. In fact, **the mitzvah to create a fair system of courts** is one of the seven mitzvot that apply to all nations, not just the Jewish people (Sanhedrin 56a). In Jewish law, **a court is called a בֵּית דִּין (beit din)**. The Mishnah describes different levels, depending on the number of judges:

- ♦ **Beit Din of 3:** These courts mostly dealt with money issues, like if someone committed robbery or caused damage to someone else's property (Mishnah Sanhedrin 1:1).
- ♦ **Beit Din of 23:** These courts were able to judge matters of life and death (Mishnah Sanhedrin 1:4).
- ♦ **Beit Din of 71:** Also known as the Beit Din Ha-Gadol, this court decided the most important cases facing the Jewish people, like if the כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל (kohen gadol, high priest) was on trial, or if a decision was needed about going to war (Mishnah Sanhedrin 1:5-6).



You might have noticed that every beit din had an odd number of judges! This ensured that the majority could rule, and judges would never be split equally on a decision (Mishnah Sanhedrin 1:6).

Beit Din Today

Today, a person might go to a beit din for a number of reasons.

- ♦ If people are disagreeing about money, they can decide to have a beit din help resolve their issue using Jewish law, rather than going to a secular court.
- ♦ Some religious ceremonies require a beit din of three. For example, when a person joins the Jewish people, the גֵּירוּת (geirut, conversion) ceremony requires a beit din.
- ♦ Before Rosh Hashanah, many communities have the custom to perform הַתֵּרַת נִדְרִים (Hatarat Nedarim). In this ritual, people say a formula that frees them from any vows they took in the past year. Hatarat Nedarim is always said in front of a group of three people, who serve as a beit din.



בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

How did the חמשים (humashim, five books of the Torah) get their names?

The names we use in English are mostly from Greek. They were chosen because they relate to the content of each book:

- | | | |
|----------------|--|--|
| 1. Genesis | creation | |
| 2. Exodus | exiting Egypt | |
| 3. Leviticus | stuff to do with Levi'im and Kohanim | |
| 4. Numbers | they count the people a lot | |
| 5. Deuteronomy | repetition of the law (because stories and mitzvot we've seen before are repeated) | |

The Hebrew names that we normally use today are based on the first important word in each book's opening pasuk (exactly like the way we name the parashah):

- | | | | |
|----|-----------|------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Bereishit | in the beginning | בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ |
| 2. | Shemot | names | וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַבָּאִים מִצְרָיִם |
| 3. | Vayikra | [God] called | וַיִּקְרָא אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֵלָיו מֵאֵהָל מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר |
| 4. | Bemidbar | in the wilderness of [Sinai] | וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל-מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַּר סִינַי בְּאֵהָל מוֹעֵד |
| 5. | Devarim | words | אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן |

But these are not their only names in Hebrew! Hazal have other names for the humashim. Which of these do you think connect to the Greek/English names above?

Talmud Bavli
Avodah Zara 25a

Ramban on
Shemot 40:35

1. סֵפֶר הַיָּשָׁר (Sefer Ha-Yashar, Book of the Righteous)
2. סֵפֶר הַגְּאֻלָּה (Sefer Ha-Geulah, Book of Redemption)
3. תּוֹרַת כֹּהֲנִים (Torat Kohanim, Law of Priests)
4. חֻמַּשׁ הַפְּקוּדִים (Humash Ha-Pekudim, Scroll of Countings)
5. מִשְׁנֵה תּוֹרָה (Mishneh Torah, Repetition of Law)



- ◆ Do you think it makes more sense to name books after their content, or after their first important word? Can you think of arguments for both sides?
- ◆ Even though much of Sefer Devarim contains "repetitions," over the next few months, pay attention and you might notice some big differences between how stories appear the first time in the Torah versus how Moshe retells them years later!



דְּבַר שֶׁל דִּיּוּ • One-Minute Debate

How to play:

Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!

For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.

Debate: You always see things more clearly after the fact.



Agree!

- ◆ When you are living through something important, it can be hard to understand its significance. After some time passes, you can look back and see the whole picture.
- ◆ Sometimes it's good to take a break, walk away, and come back to look at something with a clear mind.
- ◆ Looking back on his 40 years as leader, Moshe is able to give his most eloquent and inspiring speech.



Disagree!

- ◆ You see things most clearly when they're right in front of you. If you ask four different people how they remember the same event, you're likely to get four different stories because our memories play tricks on us if too much time passes!
- ◆ You'll just forget. Even the best of us forget things that we are sure we'll remember!
- ◆ Sometimes the way Moshe describes things in Devarim is different from how they were presented 40 years before. What really happened? We may never know.



שְׂאִלוֹת הַשְּׁבוּיָה • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. **The answers to the last three are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah.**

aliyot:

- 1) Devarim 1:1 to 1:10
- 2) 1:11 to 1:21
- 3) 1:22 to 1:38
- 4) 1:39 to 2:1
- 5) 2:2 to 2:30
- 6) 2:31 to 3:14
- 7) 3:15 to 3:22

Good luck!

1 How many days' journey was it from Horeiv to Kadeish Barnea?

2 What kind of cases does Moshe tell the other judges to bring to him?

3 According to our parashah, whose idea was it to send spies into the land?



4 What animal are the Emori people compared to?

5 What funny-sounding word did the Ammonim use to describe the Rephaim?

7 The Dead Sea is commonly called יָם הַמֶּלַח (Yam Ha-Melah, "The Salt Sea"). What other name for this body of water appears in our parashah?

6 How long was the bed of Og, King of the Bashan?

8 There are four נְחָלִים (nehalim, streams) mentioned in our parashah. What are their names?

9 What was special about the 60 towns in חֶבְלֵי אֶרֶגֶב (Hevel Argov, the Argov Strip)?

10 Of the five megillot in the Tanakh, which has an opening word that does not appear in our parashah?



*
Look for
the answers
on page 12!



רִגְעַן שֶׁל עִבְרִית • A Moment of Hebrew

Devarim 1:18

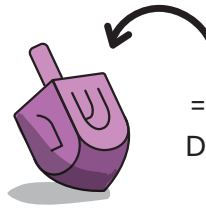
We marched back into the wilderness by the way of the Sea of Reeds, as God had spoken to me, and **went around** the hill country of Seir for a long time.

דברים ב:א

וַנֵּפֶן וַנֵּסֶע הַמִּדְבָּרָה דֶּרֶךְ יַם סוּף
כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר ה' אֵלַי וַנָּסֶב אֶת הָרִשְׁעִיר לְמִיָּם רַבִּים:

לְהַסִּב (שִׁרְשׁ ס.ב.ב.)

- ◆ To turn or switch direction
- ◆ To cause or bring about
- ◆ To change or convert (lehaseiv)



סִבִּיבּוֹן
Dreidel (sevivon)

Find the Word!

- ◆ Does the word מְסִבִּין (mesubin, reclining) remind you of a holiday? (Hint: "How is this night different?")
- ◆ When Yosef shares his dream about the wheat piles with his brothers, he uses a word that shares this שִׁרְשׁ (shoresh, root)! Can you find it? (Hint: Check out Bereishit 37.)

מְסִבָּה

Party (mesibah)

סִבִּיבּוֹ

Go around in a circle, take a lap, go for a spin or a short ride (sivuv)

סִבִּיבָה

Environment (sevivah)

מְסִבִּין

Reclining (mesubin)





Yetiv יְתִיב

Yetiv is a simple, dramatic, and exciting trop. It bursts onto the scene with a high note and then drops down to a lower note. It adds flair to whatever is being read and tells the reader to pay attention. It means "sitting," and the note sort of sounds like someone jumping up and then settling down into their seat.

A yetiv always eventually leads into a zakeif katon (we learned about that one a few weeks back!), though it has a few ways to get there. It is usually followed by one or two munahim, but there is one place in the Torah where a yetiv is followed by a pashta. And guess what, that's in our parashah! Here are two occurrences of yetiv from the same verse:



QUICK FACTS

1

How many times does it appear in the Torah?

356—Unusual

2

Approximately every 16 pesukim

Does it end a musical phrase?

Yes

3

Is it above or below the word?

Below

4

Where is it placed on the word?

At the beginning

דברים א:ד

את סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי

עֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן

Devarim 1:4

Sihon, king of the Emori

Og, king of the Bashan

You might be saying: Hey, doesn't yetiv look exactly the same as mahpakh? How will I ever tell them apart? In fact, how do I know whether that trop before the pashta even is a yetiv? Good question. Here is the only place in the Torah where mahpakh and yetiv appear back to back:



בראשית כב:טז

יֵעַן אִשָּׁר

Before or after Shabbat, scan to hear these yetivs!

Can you tell the difference? They do have the same shape, but whereas mahpakh appears on the accented part of the word, yetiv appears right at the beginning, always to the right of the vowel on the first letter. And yetiv only ever appears on words that have their accent on the first syllable. That sounds good with yetiv's strong opening note.

Pay attention and don't get surprised when yetiv suddenly jumps out at you! There are nine total in our parashah; can you catch them all?



בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

Og, king of the Bashan, came up in the Torah Trop section (p. 10). There's another pasuk in our parashah that tells us more about him.

Devarim 3:11

Only King Og of Bashan was left of the remaining Refa'im. His bed, an iron bed, is now in Rabbah of Benei Amon; it is nine cubits long and four cubits wide, by the standard cubit.

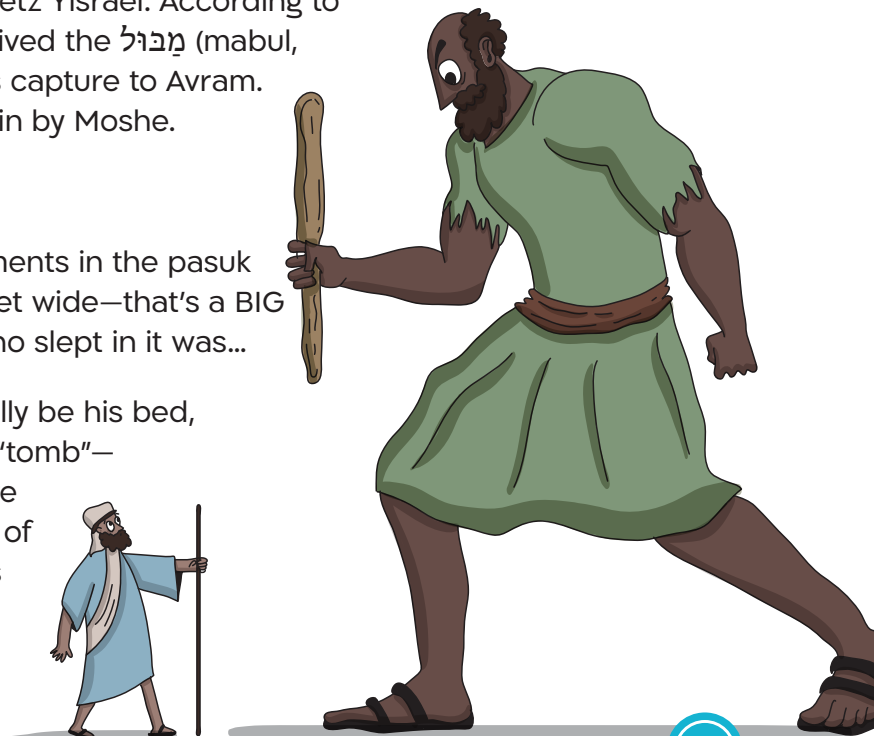
דברים ג:יא

כִּי רַק עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן נִשָּׂאֵר מִיְתֵר
הָרְפָאִים הַנֶּה עָרְשׁוֹ עָרֵשׁ בְּרִזְלֵ הָלֶה
הוּא בְּרֵבֶת בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן תִּשַׁע אַמּוֹת אָרְכָּה
וְאַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת רָחְבָּהּ בְּאַמַּת אִישׁ:

An unusual pasuk, for sure! What do you wonder about?

Here are some of the things going on:

- ♦ **Who is Og?** The King of Bashan, one of the enemies Benei Yisrael defeated on their way into Eretz Yisrael. According to a midrash, back in Bereishit, he survived the מַבּוּל (mabul, flood) and brought the news of Lot's capture to Avram. According to the Talmud, he was slain by Moshe.
- ♦ **What are Refa'im?** Giants!
- ♦ **How big is Og's bed?** The measurements in the pasuk equal around 13.5 feet long and 6 feet wide—that's a BIG bed! Imagine how big the person who slept in it was...
- ♦ **What is Og's bed?** "Bed" might literally be his bed, or it might be a fancy way of saying "tomb"—his final resting place. There are huge tombs we can see today in the area of Bashan, in the north of Israel. One is called Gilgal Refa'im (Giants' Wheel). Perhaps one of these is Og's!





מה זה • What's Going On Here?

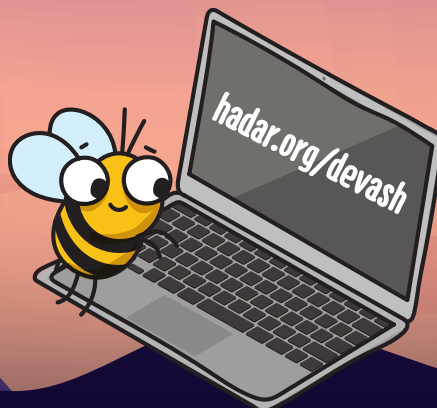
Benei Yisrael are compared to the stars in the sky (Devarim 1:10). What makes them like stars?

- ♦ **Rashi** says it's a comparison about **time**. Benei Yisrael will exist forever, just like the sun, moon, and stars shine on and on.
- ♦ **Ibn Ezra** says it's about **amount**. Benei Yisrael will be infinite and impossible to count, like stars.
- ♦ **Ha'amek Davar** connects it to **purpose**. Benei Yisrael shine a light for their generation, just like the sun and stars.

Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. 11 (1:2)
2. Anything that is too hard for them (1:17)
3. The people (1:22). In Bemidbar 13, it sounds like it was God's idea!
4. Bees (1:44)
5. זַמְזָמִים (zamzumim) (2:20)
6. Nine Amot—more than 13 feet! (3:11)
7. יָם הָעֲרָבָה (Yam Ha-Aravah) (3:17)
8. Eshkol (1:24), Zered (2:14), Arnon (2:24), Yabok (2:37)
9. They were all walled with locking doors (3:5)
10. Shir Ha-Shirim—the first word of that megillah, שִׁיר (shir, song) does not appear in our parashah. The others do: Ruth and Esther both begin with the word וַיְהִי (vayehi), which appears in 1:3; Eikhah begins with the word אֵיכָה (eikhah), which appears in 1:12; Kohelet begins with the word דִּבְרֵי (divrei), which appears in 2:26.

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