Chumash Fundamentals

for Adults

י־ל־ד ב־ר־ך ר־א־ה ה־ל־ך א־מ־ר

VOLUME ONE

פָּרָשַׁת לֶךְ־לְךָ

Parshas Lech Lecha · Bereishis 12–17

Shorashim, prefixes and endings taught one at a time, and then the whole parsha, word by word. For adults who can sound out Hebrew but were never taught how a Hebrew word is put together.

Contents

PART ONE · ORIENTATION

1 What this book is for, and what it assumes 5

2 Why Hebrew words are built from roots 9

PART TWO · THE TOOLKIT

3 Shorashim: three letters that carry the meaning 14

4 The six prefixes, one at a time 18

5 The endings, one at a time 26

6 Putting it together 34

7 The letters that disappear 38

8 Binyanim and tenses: the verb system 43

PART THREE · THE TEXT

9 How to use these pages 50

10 Perek 12: the call, the land, and the descent to Egypt 52

11 Perek 13: Avram and Lot separate 82

12 Perek 14: the war of the kings, and Malki-Tzedek 110

13 Perek 15: the covenant between the pieces 150

14 Perek 16: Hagar and the birth of Yishmael 181

15 Perek 17: circumcision, and the new names 206

APPENDICES

A The 200 commonest shorashim in the Chumash 249

B The 200 commonest content words 261

C The 118 commonest particles and function words 273

D Glossary 281

E Answers to the review questions 285

PART ONE

Orientation

What this book is for, what it asks of you, and the one idea that makes Hebrew words stop looking like noise.

CHAPTER 1

What this book is for, and what it assumes

An honest account of the entry requirements.

THE GOAL OF THIS BOOK

By the end, you should be able to open a Chumash at Parshas Lech Lecha, look at a word you have never studied, take it apart into its pieces, and say out loud what each piece is doing there.

Most adults who want to learn Chumash are not starting from nothing. They can read Hebrew letters. They have heard the stories since childhood. They own a Chumash with a good English translation, and they can follow the narrative perfectly well.

What they cannot do is read the Hebrew and know what it says. The English is on the facing page, so the eye slides across to it, and the Hebrew stays a column of decorative shapes. Years pass. The translation gets read; the text does not.

This book is about closing that gap, and it takes a narrow, stubborn approach to it. It does not try to teach you Hebrew as a language. It teaches you to take Hebrew words apart. That is a much smaller skill, and it is the one that actually unlocks the page.

Here is the reason it works. Hebrew is not built the way English is. An English word is mostly a lump you memorise. A Hebrew word is assembled, in front of you, out of a small number of reusable parts: a three-letter root that carries the meaning, a handful of one-letter prefixes glued to the front, and a handful of endings glued to the back. Learn the parts, there are not many, and a word you have never seen before stops being unknown. It becomes a word you can disassemble.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

You will not come out of this book fluent. You will come out able to look at וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ and say: that is *and*, plus *from*, plus a noun built on the root meaning *to give birth*, plus *your*, so, *and from your birthplace*. That is a real skill, it is permanent, and it transfers to every page of Chumash you will ever open.

What this book assumes

It assumes one thing:

- You can sound out vowelled Hebrew, even slowly, even with a finger on the page. Every Hebrew word in this book is printed with nikud, and reading the words aloud is part of the method, the pieces of a word are easier to hear than to see.

It assumes nothing else. In particular, not:

- Any prior study of Chumash in Hebrew.
- Any knowledge of Hebrew grammar. Every grammatical term used here is explained where it first appears and collected in the glossary.
- Any vocabulary. Every word of the parsha is glossed in this book, piece by piece.
- Any yeshiva or day-school background.
- Any experience with Rashi, or with reading Rashi script. Where Rashi appears in this book, he appears in English.

If you cannot yet sound out vowelled Hebrew, that is a different problem from the one this book solves, and a smaller one. It is a few weeks of work, taught constantly to adults, usually free: a beginners' reading course at a shul, a one-to-one learning partner, or a tutor for a handful of sessions. The alef-beis and the vowels are a finite body of material. Get that first, then come back.

How this book is built

There are three parts and a set of appendices.

- **Part One** is orientation: this chapter, and then the single idea the whole method rests on.
- **Part Two** is the toolkit. Roots, then each prefix on its own, then each suffix on its own, then, only then, putting a whole word together. Then two harder matters: letters that vanish from a root, and the system of verb patterns.
- **Part Three** is the text itself: all of Parshas Lech Lecha, Bereishis 12 through 17, pasuk by pasuk, every word broken into its pieces, with the translation, a plain-terms note, and Rashi where he resolves a genuine difficulty.

Work Part Two before Part Three. Part Three is written on the assumption that the color coding, the six prefixes and the endings are already familiar to you; it will be slow going otherwise.

> **ONE THING THAT IS NOT LIKE YOUR CHUMASH**
>
> Where the text has the four-letter Name, this book prints ה׳ in its place. Your Chumash will have the Name itself written out, so the Hebrew on these pages will not match it letter for letter at those points, that is the one deliberate difference, and it is the only place where what you see here is not exactly what is in the sefer.
>
> The reason is practical. A page carrying the Name may not simply be thrown out; it has to be put into geniza. This book is meant to be marked up, carried around, printed and reprinted, so it is set in a way that keeps that from becoming a problem. When you read the pasuk aloud, read the Name as you always would.

ONE THING ABOUT THE HEBREW

Every Hebrew word in this book is printed with the vowels and *without* the cantillation marks (te'amim), the small hooks and wedges above and below the letters that tell a reader how the verse is chanted. They belong to someone who is already reading fluently. While you are still working out which letter is doing what, they are extra marks competing with the vowels, so they are not here. Your own Chumash will have them: that is the one visible difference you will notice between this page and that one.

REVIEW

Answers in Appendix E.

1. What is the one thing this book assumes you can already do?
2. What is the difference between reading a translation and reading the text?
3. Why does the book insist you work Part Two before Part Three?

CHAPTER 2

Why Hebrew words are built from roots

The single biggest idea in the book, and the arithmetic that justifies it.

Take four words from the first pasuk of our parsha. They have nothing in common to the eye:

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
מֵאַרְצְךָ	מֵ·אַרְצְ·ךָ	from + the earth + your	א־ר־צ	12:1
וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ	וּ·מִ·מּוֹלַדְתְּ·ךָ	and + from + birthplace, kindred + your	י־ל־ד	12:1
וּמִבֵּית	וּ·מִ·בֵּית	and + from + house	ב־נ־ה	12:1
אָבִיךָ	אָבִי·ךָ	father, parent + your	אָב	12:1

Look at the fourth column. Each of those words is standing on a three-letter skeleton, and the skeleton is doing the work. The same three letters י־ל־ד carry the verb the dictionary glosses *to give birth*, which is why the noun built on them names the place you were born. The three letters ב־נ־ה carry both the word for a house and the word for a son, glossed *son, builder*, because a son builds the family line. You are not memorising four unrelated words. You are recognising three skeletons and a few glued-on pieces.

That is the whole idea. Nearly every Hebrew word of substance is a *shoresh* (a root) of three letters, wearing a pattern of vowels, sometimes with a one-letter prefix in front and an ending behind. The root supplies the meaning. The vowels and the affixes

supply the grammar: who did it, to whom, when, and whether the word is a verb, a noun or something else.

The arithmetic

This would be a nice observation even if it were not efficient. It happens to be extremely efficient, and the numbers are worth seeing, because they explain why so little learning buys so much reading.

The three frequency tables in the appendices were compiled by counting every word in the whole Chumash. They say this:

- The top **118 particles and function words**, the prefixes, the prepositions, the little connecting words, account for **41.75%** of every word in the Chumash.
- The top **200 roots** account for a further **31.31%**.
- The top **200 content words** (counted as dictionary headwords rather than roots) account for **27.73%**.

Read the first line again. Under a hundred and twenty small words and prefixes, most of them one letter long, make up more than two fifths of the Chumash. They are in Appendix C. You could learn the first thirty of them this week.

The same shape shows up in miniature in the perek you are about to study. Counting every word of Bereishis 12 in the analysis this book is generated from:

- There are **268 words** in the perek, made of **435 pieces**: 260 roots-and-stems, **122 prefixes** and **53 suffixes**.
- **149 of the 268 words**, well over half, carry at least one prefix or one ending. Half of what looks like new vocabulary is old vocabulary in a coat.
- The root-bearing words in the perek stand on just **55 different roots**, and **every one of those 55** is inside the top 200 of the whole Chumash. Ninety-six of those words are built on a root from the top **50**.

Nothing in Perek 12 is exotic. The vocabulary of Avram's journey is the ordinary vocabulary of the Chumash: to say, to go, to see, to give, land, house, woman, name, son.

IN PLAIN TERMS

This is why the effort in this book is front-loaded. Part Two looks like a lot of small rules. It is really six prefixes, six endings, and one idea about roots. Once they are in place, they never need to be learned again, they simply keep paying, on every line of every parsha, for the rest of your life.

REVIEW

Answers in Appendix E.

1. In your own words: what does the root of a Hebrew word supply, and what do the vowels and affixes supply?
2. The top 118 particles cover what share of the Chumash?
3. Of the 268 words in Bereishis 12, how many carry a prefix or a suffix?
4. Why is it significant that all 55 roots in Perek 12 are in the Chumash's top 200?

WHAT YOU NOW KNOW

- A Hebrew word is assembled from reusable parts, not memorised as a lump.
- The three-letter root carries the meaning; vowels and affixes carry the grammar.
- The top 118 particles are 41.75% of the Chumash; the top 200 roots a further 31.31%.
- Over half the words in Bereishis 12 carry a prefix or an ending.
- All 55 roots used in Bereishis 12 are among the 200 commonest roots in the Chumash.

PART TWO

The Toolkit

Roots, then the six prefixes one at a time, then the endings one at a time, and only then the whole word.

CHAPTER 3

Shorashim: three letters that carry the meaning

What a root is, and how to see one.

A *shoresh* is a root: three consonants, in a fixed order, carrying a single area of meaning. It is written with the letters joined by a light connector, like י־ל־ד, to show that it is an abstraction, not a word you would ever pronounce as it stands. The last letter is always written in its ordinary form, never the final form, for the same reason.

The root never appears bare. It appears dressed: with vowels poured between its letters, and often with something glued to the front or the back. Different clothing, same skeleton.

One root, several words

The clearest way to see this is to take one root and watch it surface as different parts of speech in the same perek.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
וּמִבֵּית	וּ·מִ·בֵּית	and + from + house	ב־נ־ה	12:1
בֶּן	בֶּן	son, builder	ב־נ־ה	12:4
וַיִּבֶן	וַ·יִּבֶן	and + to build	ב־נ־ה	12:7
בֵּית	בֵּית	house	ב־נ־ה	12:15

Four words, one shoresh: ב־נ־ה. A house is a built thing. A son is a builder of the family line, that is not a poetic flourish, it is how the dictionary glosses the word: son, builder. And in pasuk 7 the same three letters are a verb, labeled Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular, and Avram builds an altar.

בֶּן

בֶּן

son, builder

a noun on the shoresh of building · Bereishis 12:4 · shoresh ב־נ־ה

Not every word has a shoresh

Some very common words are simply not built on three letters. A *milah* is a word in its own right: you learn it as it stands, from the dictionary, and there is nothing to take apart. This is the distinction the children's workbooks draw, and it is worth drawing, because hunting for a root that is not there wastes a great deal of time.

Five milim turn up in this perek: אָב, a father; אָח, a brother; שֵׁם, a name; יָם, a sea (and so also *west*); and שִׁבְעִים, seventy. None of them is three letters wearing vowels.

In this book the difference is marked on every breakdown in Part Three. A word either says **shoresh**, followed by three connected letters, or **milah**, followed by the dictionary word itself. If it says *milah*, stop looking for a root.

A second example, from the same pasuk

Pasuk 1 gives Avram three things to leave. The second of them is וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ. Take away the וּ (*and*), take away the מִ (*from*), take away the ךָ (*your*), and what is left stands on the shoresh י־ל־ד, the same three letters as the verb glossed *to give birth*. Your birthplace is where the giving-birth happened.

The shorashim that carry this perek

Here are some of the roots that do the most work in Bereishis 12, each shown through a real word from the text. You are not asked to memorise them. You are asked to notice that they are ordinary.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
וַיֹּאמֶר	וַ·יֹּאמֶר	and + to say	א־מ־ר	12:1
וַיֵּלֶךְ	וַ·יֵּלֶךְ	and + to walk, carry	י־ל־כ	12:4
אַרְאֶךָ	אַרְאֶ·ךָ	to see + your	ר־א־ה	12:1
אֶתֵּן	אֶתֵּן	to give	נ־ת־נ	12:7
וַיִּקַּח	וַ·יִּקַּח	and + to take	ל־ק־ח	12:5
וַאֲבָרֶכְךָ	וַ·אֲבָרֶכְ·ךָ	and + to bless + your	ב־ר־כ	12:2
אִשְׁתּוֹ	אִשְׁתּ·וֹ	woman + his/her/its	א־ש־ה	12:5
שְׁמֶךָ	שְׁמֶ·ךָ	name, honor + your	שֵׁם	12:2

IN PLAIN TERMS

Do not go hunting for the root by counting letters. Go the other way round: learn to spot the *prefixes* and the *endings*, peel them off, and whatever is left is the root wearing its vowels. That is what the next three chapters train.

REVIEW

Answers in Appendix E.

1. Why is a shoresh written with connectors between the letters, and never with a final-form letter?
2. The words for *house* and *son* share a shoresh. What idea do those three letters carry?
3. What is a *milah*, and how do you tell one from a shoresh?
4. What is the practical procedure for finding a shoresh inside a word?

CHAPTER 4

The six prefixes, one at a time

Six single letters that attach to the front of a word. Learn what each one means before learning how to peel it off.

Six letters in Hebrew can be glued onto the front of a word. Each has its own meaning, and that meaning does not change. They are not decorations and they are not part of the root; they are words in their own right that happen to be written joined on.

In English these six ideas are separate words: *and*, *the*, *to*, *in*, *from*, *like*. In Hebrew they are single letters riding on the front of the next word. That is the only real difference.

COLOR KEY בּ prefix שׁ root / stem ך suffix

This chapter takes them one at a time, in order of how often they turn up. For each, the meaning comes first; the examples are all real words from Bereishis 12. Counting every word of the perek, the six prefixes appear 122 times between them.

וַ

and

conjunction

65 of the 122 prefixes in Perek 12

By far the commonest letter in the Chumash. It joins one thing to the next: and, and then, and so. In the appendix tables it is the single most frequent item in the whole Chumash at **11.09%** of all words.

In a narrative it does most of the storytelling. Look down the left edge of almost any Chumash column and you will see verse after verse starting with it.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
וַיֹּאמֶר	וַ·יֹּאמֶר	and + to say	א־מ־ר	12:1
וַיֵּלֶךְ	וַ·יֵּלֶךְ	and + to walk, carry	י־ל־כ	12:4
וְאֲבָרֶכְךָ	וַ·אֲבָרֶכְ·ךָ	and + to bless + your	ב־ר־כ	12:2
וַיֵּצְאוּ	וַ·יֵּצְאוּ	and + to go out, bring out	י־צ־א	12:5
וַיֵּרֶד	וַ·יֵּרֶד	and + to go down	י־ר־ד	12:10

לְ

to, for

preposition

20 of the 122 prefixes in Perek 12

Direction or benefit: *to* somewhere, *for* somebody. It is the third commonest word in the Chumash at **4.65%**.

It also does a job English needs several words for. Put it in front of a verb and it makes an infinitive, *to go*, *to come*, *to stay*.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
לְךָ	לְ·ךָ	to / for + your		12:1
לְגוֹי	לְ·גוֹי	to / for + foreign nation	ג–ו–י	12:2
לְזַרְעֲךָ	לְ·זַרְעֲ·ךָ	to / for + seed, plant, offspring + your	ז–ר–ע	12:7
לָלֶכֶת	לָ·לֶכֶת	to / for + to walk, carry	י–ל–כ	12:5
לָגוּר	לָ·גוּר	to / for + to sojourn, to stay as a guest	ג–ו–ר	12:10

הָ the

definite article

15 of the 122 prefixes in Perek 12

The definite article. Hebrew has no separate word for *the*; it has this letter, and it usually doubles the first letter of the word it lands on. **6.00%** of the Chumash.

It matters more than it looks. In pasuk 1 Avram is sent to *the* land, a particular one, not any land, and the whole difficulty Rashi raises there hangs on it.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
הָאָרֶץ	הָ·אָרֶץ	the + the earth	א-ר-צ	12:1
הַנֶּפֶשׁ	הַ·נֶּפֶשׁ	the + living creature	נ-פ-ש	12:5
הַזֹּאת	הַ·זֹּאת	the + this one		12:7
הָרָעָב	הָ·רָעָב	the + hunger		12:10
הָאִשָּׁה	הָ·אִשָּׁה	the + woman	א-ש-ה	12:14

בְּ

in, with, by

preposition

11 of the 122 prefixes in Perek 12

Location or instrument: *in* a place, *with* a thing, *by* means of something. **3.13%** of the Chumash.

Which of the three English senses is right depends on what follows, and you will usually feel it. *In the land* is a place; *through you* in pasuk 3 is the instrument sense.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
בְּךָ	בְּ·ךָ	in / with / by + your		12:3
בָּאָרֶץ	בָּ·אָרֶץ	in / with / by + the earth	א-ר-צ	12:6
בְּשֵׁם	בְּ·שֵׁם	in / with / by + name, honor	שֵׁם	12:8
בְּצֵאתוֹ	בְּ·צֵאת·וֹ	in / with / by + to go out, bring out + his/her/its	י-צ-א	12:4
בְּחָרָן	בְּ·חָרָן	in / with / by + Charan		12:5

מִ from

preposition

8 of the 122 prefixes in Perek 12

Origin: *from, out of*. **1.31%** of the Chumash as a prefix, and there is also a standalone word with the same meaning.

Pasuk 1 uses it three times in a row, and the repetition is the point: from your land, from your birthplace, from your father's house.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
מֵאַרְצְךָ	מֵ·אַרְצְ·ךָ	from + the earth + your	א-ר-צ	12:1
וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ	וּ·מִ·מּוֹלַדְתְּ·ךָ	and + from + birthplace, kindred + your	י-ל-ד	12:1
וּמִבֵּית	וּ·מִ·בֵּית	and + from + house	ב-נ-ה	12:1
מֵחָרָן	מֵ·חָרָן	from + Charan		12:4
מִשָּׁם	מִ·שָּׁם	from + then, there		12:8

כַּ

like, as

preposition

3 of the 122 prefixes in Perek 12

Comparison or timing: *like*, *as*. The rarest of the six, at **0.46%** of the Chumash, but worth knowing because of the phrase it forms.

Glued to the relative word כַּאֲשֶׁר it gives *as* or *just as*, and in pasuk 4 that is exactly what carries the sentence: Avram went *just as* Hashem had spoken to him.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
כַּאֲשֶׁר	כַּ·אֲשֶׁר	like / as + who, which, what, that, when, where, how		12:4
כַּאֲשֶׁר	כַּ·אֲשֶׁר	like / as + who, which, what, that, when, where, how		12:11
כְּבוֹא	כְּ·בוֹא	like / as + to bring to, give	ב-ו-א	12:14

IN PLAIN TERMS

The vowel under a prefix moves around, sometimes a sheva, sometimes a patach, sometimes a kamatz, and in front of certain letters the prefix lengthens or the following letter doubles. Those shifts are real, and they are governed by rules, but they never change the meaning. For now: recognize the letter, take the meaning, and let the vowel do whatever it likes.

REVIEW

Answers in Appendix E.

1. Give the meaning of each of the six prefixes, in order of frequency.
2. Which prefix, placed in front of a verb, produces an infinitive?
3. What share of the whole Chumash is the prefix meaning *and*?
4. Why can the same prefix be translated *in*, *with* or *by*?

CHAPTER 5

The endings, one at a time

Possessive endings, and one ending that means "toward".

Hebrew glues things onto the back of a word as well as the front. The commonest are the **possessive endings**: little syllables meaning *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *their*. English needs a separate word for these. Hebrew does not.

So the English *your land*, two words, is one word in Hebrew: the noun for land, with the ending for *your* stuck on the end. The same ending can also attach to a preposition, which is how Hebrew says *to you*, *with him*, *for her* in a single word.

COLOR KEY בּ prefix ש root / stem ך suffix

As with the prefixes: the meaning first. Here is each ending that appears in Bereishis 12, with its meaning and real examples. The endings appear 53 times in the perek.

ִי my

1st person singular

8 times in Perek 12

Attached to a noun it means *my*; attached to a preposition it means *me* or *to me*.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
אֲחֹתִי	אֲחֹתִ·י	a sister + my		12:13
נַפְשִׁי	נַפְשִׁ·י	living creature + my	נ–פ–ש	12:13
לִי	לִ·י	to / for + my		12:13
אִתִּי	אִתִּ·י	to + my		12:12
לִי	לִ·י	to / for + my		12:18

ךָ your

2nd person singular, masculine

14 times in Perek 12

The ending addressed to one man. It is everywhere in pasuk 1, because the whole pasuk is Hashem speaking directly to Avram: *your* land, *your* birthplace, *your* father.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
מֵאַרְצְךָ	מֵ·אַרְצְ·ךָ	from + the earth + your	א־ר־צ	12:1
וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ	וּ·מִ·מּוֹלַדְתְּ·ךָ	and + from + birthplace, kindred + your	י־ל־ד	12:1
אָבִיךָ	אָבִי·ךָ	father, parent + your	אָב	12:1
שְׁמֶךָ	שְׁמֶ·ךָ	name, honor + your	שֵׁם	12:2
לְזַרְעֲךָ	לְ·זַרְעֲ·ךָ	to / for + seed, plant, offspring + your	ז־ר־ע	12:7

ךָ your

2nd person singular, feminine

4 times in Perek 12

The same idea, addressed to one woman. It appears in pesukim 12 and 13, where Avram is speaking to Sarai.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
אֹתָךְ	אֹתָ·ךְ	to + your		12:12
וְאֹתָךְ	וְ·אֹתָ·ךְ	and + to + your		12:12
בַּעֲבוּרֵךְ	בַּ·עֲבוּרֵ·ךְ	in / with / by + crossed + your	ע-ב-ר	12:13
בִּגְלָלֵךְ	בִּ·גְלָלֵ·ךְ	in / with / by + on account of + your		12:13

וֹ his, her, its

3rd person singular, masculine

15 times in Perek 12

The commonest ending in the perek. On a noun: *his wife*, *his brother*. On a preposition: *with him*, *to him*.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
אִשְׁתּוֹ	אִשְׁתּ·וֹ	woman + his/her/its	א-ש-ה	12:5
אָחִיו	אָחִי·וֹ	brother, sibling + his/her/its	אָח	12:5
אִתּוֹ	אִת·וֹ	with, by, at, among + his/her/its		12:4
אֵלָיו	אֵלָי·וֹ	near, toward, among + his/her/its		12:4
אָהֳלֹה	אָהֳל·ה	tent + his/her/its	א-ה-ל	12:8

ה֑ — his, her, its

3rd person singular, feminine

4 times in Perek 12

Written with a hei, and marked with a dot inside it. It refers back to Sarai throughout pesukim 15 to 19.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
אֹתָהּ	אֹתָ·ה֑	to + his/her/its		12:15
בַּעֲבוּרָהּ	בַּ·עֲבוּרָ·ה֑	in / with / by + crossed + his/her/its	ע-ב-ר	12:16
אֹתָהּ	אֹתָ·ה֑	to + his/her/its		12:19

ם — their

3rd person plural, masculine

once in Perek 12

Rare in this perek, it appears exactly once, in the inventory of what Avram's household took out of Charan.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
רְכוּשָׁם	רְכוּשָׁ·ם	property + their		12:5

TWO GAPS, STATED HONESTLY

Two endings you should know exist but will not meet here: the one meaning *our* does not appear anywhere in Parshas Lech Lecha, and the one meaning *your* addressed to a group appears only later in the parsha, not in this perek. The book does not invent examples it does not have; you will meet both soon enough in the text.

An ending that is not possessive: "toward"

One more ending, and it is a different animal. A hei on the end of a place-name or a place-word does not mean *her*. It means *toward*, *in the direction of*. Hebrew has no preposition there at all, the direction is in the ending.

אַרְצָה

ה	אַרְצָ
toward	the earth

"toward the land", no preposition needed · Bereishis 12:5 · shoresh א-ר-צ

The classic example is in pasuk 5: Avram and his household set out אַרְצָה, toward the land of Canaan. The ending appears seven times in the perek, and once you know it, a whole set of journey-words becomes transparent.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
אַרְצָה	אַרְצָ·ה	the earth + toward	א-ר-צ	12:5
הָהָרָה	הָ·הָרָ·ה	the + mountain range + toward	ה-ר-ר	12:8

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
הַנֶּגְבָּה	הַ · נֶּגֶב · ה	the + the south + toward		12:9
מִצְרַיְמָה	מִצְרַיְמָ · ה	Mitzrayim, Egypt + toward		12:10
מִצְרָיְמָה	מִצְרָיְמָ · ה	Mitzrayim, Egypt + toward		12:11

IN PLAIN TERMS

Notice how much this one ending does. Pasuk 10 does not say “he went down to Egypt” with a preposition for *to*; it says “he went down Egypt-ward” with the direction carried on the end of the name. The same thing happens in pasuk 9 with the south, and in pasuk 8 with the mountain.

REVIEW

Answers in Appendix E.

1. What does a possessive ending do that English needs a separate word for?
2. Two different endings in this perek are both translated *your*. What separates them?
3. The ending on הַנֶּגְבָּה is a hei. Why does it *not* mean *her*?
4. Which possessive ending appears only once in the whole perek?

CHAPTER 6

Putting it together

Prefix + root + suffix, worked slowly, on real words.

You now know the six prefixes and the endings. This chapter is the assembly instruction.

The procedure is always the same, and it runs from the outside in:

1. **Look at the front.** Is the first letter one of the six? If so, peel it off and note its meaning. Then look again, there may be a second one underneath.
2. **Look at the back.** Is there a possessive ending, or the directional hei? Peel it off and note its meaning.
3. **What is left is the stem.** Read it for its three root letters.
4. **Reassemble in English**, from the back forward: root, then ending, then prefixes.

COLOR KEY בּ prefix ש root / stem ך suffix

Worked example one: two prefixes and an ending

The longest word in pasuk 1, and the best possible demonstration, because it has all three kinds of piece at once.

וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ

וּ	מִ	מוֹלַדְתְּ	ךָ
and	from	birthplace, kindred	your

four pieces, one word · Bereishis 12:1 · shoresh י-ל-ד

Front: a vav, *and*. Underneath it a mem, *from*. Back: the ending for *your* (one man). What is left is a noun standing on the shoresh י-ל-ד, the letters of *to give birth*. Reassembled from the back: birthplace → your birthplace → from your birthplace → and from your birthplace. Four English words in one Hebrew word of four pieces.

Worked example two: a prefix on a verb

בְּצֵאתוֹ

בְּ	צֵאת	וֹ
in / with / by	to go out, bring out	his/her/its

in his going out · Bereishis 12:4 · shoresh י-צ-א

Front: a beis, *in*. Back: the ending for *his*. The stem in the middle is a verb form, the data labels it Qal · infinitive construct, on the shoresh י-צ-א, glossed *to go out, bring out*. Literally: *in his going out*; in English, *when he left*. Hebrew packs a whole subordinate clause into one word, and it does it constantly.

Worked example three: the article plus a direction

הַנֶּגְבָּה

ה	נֶגֶב	הַ
toward	the south	the

the-south-ward · Bereishis 12:9

Front: a hei, *the*. Back: the directional hei, *toward*. In between, the word for the southern region. Three pieces, and the middle one is the only one you might not know.

Now you

Five words from the perek. Cover the right-hand columns, take each word apart on paper, then check yourself.

WORD	ITS PIECES	WHAT THE PIECES MEAN	SHORESH / MILAH	WHERE
מֵאַרְצְךָ	מֵ·אַרְצְ·ךָ	from + the earth + your	א-ר-צ	12:1
וַאֲבָרֶכְךָ	וַ·אֲבָרֶכְ·ךָ	and + to bless + your	ב-ר-כ	12:2
לְזַרְעֲךָ	לְ·זַרְעַ·ךָ	to / for + seed, plant, offspring + your	ז-ר-ע	12:7
הָהָרָה	הָ·הָרָ·ה	the + mountain range + toward	ה-ר-ר	12:8
לָלֶכֶת	לָ·לֶכֶת	to / for + to walk, carry	י-ל-כ	12:5

IN PLAIN TERMS

Some words have no prefix and no ending at all, proper names, short particles, many verbs. When you peel and find nothing to peel, that is an answer, not a failure. Roughly 119 of the 268 words in this perek are bare stems.

REVIEW

Answers in Appendix E.

1. State the four-step procedure for taking a word apart.
2. Why is it easier to work from the outside in than to hunt for the root first?
3. בְּצֵאתוֹ contains a preposition, a verb and a pronoun. Which piece is which?

WHAT YOU NOW KNOW

- The six prefixes are peeled off the front, outermost first.
- Possessive endings and the directional hei are peeled off the back.
- Whatever remains is the stem, standing on a three-letter root.
- English is reassembled from the back of the Hebrew word forward.

CHAPTER 7

The letters that disappear

Why a three-letter shoresh sometimes shows up with only two letters visible.

Here is the first thing that will genuinely confuse you, so it is worth meeting on purpose rather than by accident.

Four Hebrew letters are unstable: **yud, vav, nun and hei**. When one of them sits in a shoresh, it sometimes vanishes from the written word altogether. The shoresh is still three letters. The word in front of you only shows two of them.

The very first command of the parsha is an example. לֶךְ is built on the shoresh י-ל-כ. The yud is not there. It has not been mislaid, a yud at the front of a shoresh regularly drops when the verb is a command.

לֶךְ

לֶךְ
to walk, carry

two letters visible, three in the shoresh · Bereishis 12:1 · shoresh י-ל-כ

Where each of the four goes missing

Every example below is a real word from Bereishis 12, and the shoresh in the third column is the one the data assigns to it. Read across: the word, then the letters you cannot see.

Yud at the front of the shoresh

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
לֶךְ	י-ל-כ	Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular	to walk, carry	12:1
וַיֵּלֶךְ	י-ל-כ	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to walk, carry	12:4
לָלֶכֶת	י-ל-כ	Qal · infinitive construct	to walk, carry	12:5
בְּצֵאתוֹ	י-צ-א	Qal · infinitive construct	to go out, bring out	12:4
וַיֵּרֶד	י-ר-ד	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to go down	12:10
וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ	י-ל-ד	noun · feminine · singular · construct state	birthplace, kindred	12:1

Notice the last row. The yud has not simply gone, it has turned into a vav. That is the other thing weak letters do: they change into one another.

Nun at the front of the shoresh

A nun at the front of a shoresh does not usually drop out of sight; it collapses into the next letter, which then carries a dagesh (the dot inside a letter) to show that something was absorbed.

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
אֶתֵּן	נ-ת-נ	Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular	to give	12:7
וַיִּסַּע	נ-ס-ע	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to start a journey	12:9

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
וַיֵּט	נ-ט-ה	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to stretch or spread out	12:8

Hei at the end of the shoresh

A hei in third position is the least stable letter in Hebrew. It disappears whenever anything is attached behind it, and often when nothing is.

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
אַרְאֶךָ	ר-א-ה	Hifil · imperfect · 1st common singular	to see	12:1
וַיִּבֶן	ב-נ-ה	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to build	12:7
וּמִבֵּית	ב-נ-ה	noun · masculine · singular · construct state	house	12:1
וַיְהִי	ה-י-ה	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to be	12:10
וְאֶעֱשְׂךָ	ע-ש-ה	Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular	to make	12:2

Vav in the middle of the shoresh

A vav in the middle is usually swallowed by the vowel, which is why these verbs look so short.

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
לָבוֹא	ב-ו-א	Qal · infinitive construct	to bring to, give	12:11

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
לָגוּר	ג־ו־ר	Qal · infinitive construct	to sojourn, to stay as a guest	12:10
וַיָּבֹאוּ	ב־ו־א	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural	to bring to, give	12:5

IN PLAIN TERMS

You do not have to predict any of this. Nobody reading a Chumash sits there deriving forms. What you need is the opposite habit: when a word looks two letters short, do not conclude that you have never seen the shoresh before. Ask which of the four unstable letters is hiding, and the word usually turns out to be one you know.

One word in pasuk 8 does it twice over: וַיֶּט stands on the shoresh נ־ט־ה, and both the nun and the hei have gone, leaving a single visible letter of the shoresh between the prefix and the vowel. That is as extreme as it gets, and it is still the ordinary verb for pitching a tent.

REVIEW

Answers in Appendix E.

1. Name the four unstable letters.
2. What happens to a nun at the front of a shoresh, and what marks the place it went?
3. לֶךְ has how many letters of its shoresh visible?
4. Why is the practical advice “ask which letter is hiding” rather than “learn the rules”?

WHAT YOU NOW KNOW

- Yud, vav, nun and hei are unstable inside a shoresh.
- A yud at the front often drops, or turns into a vav.
- A nun at the front collapses into the next letter, which takes a dagesh.
- A hei at the end drops whenever anything is attached behind it.
- A vav in the middle is usually absorbed into the vowel.

CHAPTER 8

Binyanim and tenses: the verb system

The same three letters, poured into different molds.

A shoresh on its own is an idea, not a verb. To become a verb it has to be poured into a mold, a fixed pattern of vowels and occasional extra letters. Hebrew calls these molds *binyanim*, "buildings". The mold decides not what the verb is about, but what kind of action it is: simple, intensified, or caused.

Four binyanim appear in Bereishis 12, and the perek happens to demonstrate the system with unusual clarity, because one shoresh, ר־א־ה, turns up in three different molds within seven pesukim.

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
יִרְאוּ	ר־א־ה	Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine plural	to see	12:12
אַרְאֶךָ	ר־א־ה	Hifil · imperfect · 1st common singular	to see	12:1
וַיֵּרָא	ר־א־ה	Nifal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to see	12:7
הַנִּרְאָה	ר־א־ה	Nifal · participle · masculine singular	to see	12:7

Read those four rows slowly, because they are the whole chapter in miniature.

- In the simple mold, **Qal**, the verb means *to see*, the plain action.
- In the causative mold, **Hifil**, it means *to cause to see*, which in English is a different word entirely: *to show*. That is pasuk 1: "the land that I will show you."

- In **Nifal**, which is the passive and reflexive mold, it means *to be seen*, and when the subject is Hashem, that is what English calls *appeared*.

Same three letters throughout. The mold, not the shoresh, is what changed.

The four molds in this perek

Qal, the simple action

The default. Most verbs you meet are in it.

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
וַיֹּאמֶר	א־מ־ר	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to say	12:1
וַיֵּלֶךְ	י־ל־כ	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to walk, carry	12:4
וַיִּקַּח	ל־ק־ח	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to take	12:5
יָדַעְתִּי	י־ד־ע	Qal · perfect · 1st common singular	to know	12:11
אֶתֵּן	נ־ת־נ	Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular	to give	12:7

Piel, the intensive

Marked by a dagesh in the middle letter of the shoresh. Often intensive, often simply the mold that a particular verb lives in.

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
וַאֲבָרֶכְךָ	ב־ר־כ	Piel · imperfect · 1st common singular	to bless	12:2

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
דִּבֶּר	ד־ב־ר	Piel · perfect · 3rd masculine singular	to speak	12:4
וַיְצַו	צ־ו־ה	Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to order, command	12:20
וַיְנַגַּע	נ־ג־ע	Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to touch, strike	12:17
וַיְשַׁלְּחוּ	ש־ל־ח	Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural	to send away	12:20

Hifil, the causative

Usually marked by a hei in front. It turns an action into *causing* that action.

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
אַרְאֶךָ	ר־א־ה	Hifil · imperfect · 1st common singular	to see	12:1
הִקְרִיב	ק־ר־ב	Hifil · perfect · 3rd masculine singular	to bring near	12:11
הִגַּדְתָּ	נ־ג־ד	Hifil · perfect · 2nd masculine singular	to announce, expose	12:18
הֵיטִיב	יָטַב	Hifil · perfect · 3rd masculine singular	to go well	12:16

Nifal, passive and reflexive

Usually marked by a nun in front, though it hides in some forms.

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
וַיֵּרָא	ר־א־ה	Nifal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to see	12:7
וְנִבְרְכוּ	ב־ר־כ	Nifal · perfect · 3rd common plural	to bless	12:3
הַנִּרְאָה	ר־א־ה	Nifal · participle · masculine singular	to see	12:7

IN PLAIN TERMS

There is a fifth label in this perek. Pasuk 15 has וַתֻּקַּח, which the data marks *Qal passive · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular*: Sarai is not taking, she is *being taken*. It is a passive counterpart of the simple mold, rare enough that many grammars fold it into Nifal, and the narrative turns on it, the verse withholds any agent.

Tense, or something like it

Hebrew verbs do not carry tense the way English verbs do. They carry *aspect*: whether an action is viewed as finished or unfinished. The data labels each verb with one of a handful of these, and the labels are worth learning because they appear under every verb in Part Three.

- **perfect**, a completed action. Usually translated as English past.
- **imperfect**, an unfinished action. Usually translated as English future, sometimes as a wish or intention.
- **wayyiqtol**, the narrative form: a vav on the front of an imperfect, which flips it into the past and moves the story forward one step. This is the engine of biblical narrative, and it is by far the commonest verb form in this perek.
- **imperative**, a command.
- **infinitive construct**, the *to do* form, which takes prefixes and endings.
- **infinitive absolute**, a bare, emphatic form, often doubled up with another verb for emphasis or continuousness.
- **participle**, the *doing / one who does* form, somewhere between a verb and an adjective.

WORD	SHORESH / MILAH	WHAT THE DATA LABELS IT	MEANING	WHERE
יָדַעְתִּי	י־ד־ע	Qal · perfect · 1st common singular	to know	12:11
אֶתֵּן	נ־ת־נ	Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular	to give	12:7
וַיֹּאמֶר	א־מ־ר	Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular	to say	12:1
לֶךְ	י־ל־כ	Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular	to walk, carry	12:1
לָלֶכֶת	י־ל־כ	Qal · infinitive construct	to walk, carry	12:5
הָלוֹךְ	ה־ל־כ	Qal · infinitive absolute	to walk	12:9
מְבָרְכֶיךָ	ב־ר־כ	Piel · participle · masculine plural	to bless	12:3

IN PLAIN TERMS

Pasuk 9 shows the infinitive absolute doing its most characteristic job. Two of them in a row, הָלוֹךְ and וְנָסוֹעַ, are what produces the English "journeyed, travelling steadily" the doubling is how Hebrew says *kept on and on*.

REVIEW

Answers in Appendix E.

1. What does a binyan decide about a verb, and what does it leave to the shoresh?
2. The shoresh ר־א־ה appears in three molds in this perek. Give the English meaning of each.
3. What is a wayyiqtol, and why does narrative Hebrew use so many of them?
4. What is the difference between the perfect and the imperfect?

WHAT YOU NOW KNOW

- A binyan is a mold: it decides whether an action is simple, intensive, causative or passive.
- Qal is simple, Piel intensive, Hifil causative, Nifal passive or reflexive.
- Hebrew verbs carry aspect, finished or unfinished, rather than English tense.
- The wayyiqtol is the narrative form and drives almost every sentence in this perek.
- Every verb in Part Three is labeled with its binyan and its aspect.

PART THREE

Parshas Lech Lecha

All 126 pesukim, word by word. Everything Part Two taught you, applied to the text itself.

CHAPTER 9

How to use these pages

The shape of every pasuk in this part, and the method that makes it work.

Each pasuk gets the same things, in the same order.

1. **The full pasuk**, in Hebrew with the vowels. Read it aloud first, before you look at anything else, even if you understand none of it.
2. **The breakdown.** One card per word, reading right to left, in the order of the pasuk. Inside each card: the word with its pieces colored, then each piece with its meaning, then the shoresh or milah, then the grammatical label.
3. **The translation**, from the Metsudah Chumash.
4. **In plain terms**, a short note on what the pasuk is doing: what it states, what it leaves out, and how it sits against what came before.
5. **Rashi**, where he resolves a difficulty in the plain sense, 102 comments across the parsha. On Perek 12 they are selected; from Perek 13 on, his opening comment on the pasuk is given wherever he has one. He is quoted in the Metsudah English, the same house as the translation.

COLOR KEY בּ prefix שׁ root / stem ך suffix

A METHOD THAT WORKS

Work each pasuk in this order: read the Hebrew aloud; try the first two or three words from the breakdown without looking at the translation; then read the translation; then go back and do the rest of the words. Reading the English first is the one habit that will stop this from working.

TWO THINGS YOU WILL SEE IN THE CARDS

Where a word card says **milah** rather than **shoresh**, the word is not built on three letters and there is nothing to take apart, learn it as it stands. And a word with a small dash after it (־אֶל) is joined by a maqqef to the word that follows: the two are read as a single unit.

CHAPTER 10

Bereishis Perek 12

The call, the land, and the descent to Egypt

✦ ✦ ✦

PASUK 1 Bereishis 12:1 · 14 words

וַיֹּאמֶר ה׳ אֶל־אַבְרָם לֶךְ־לְךָ מֵאַרְצְךָ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַרְאֶךָּ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

לֶךְ־
to walk, carry לֶךְ
י־ל־כ shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

לְךָ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

מֵאַרְצְךָ
from מֵ
the earth אַרְצְ
your ךָ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ
and וּ
from מִ
birthplace, kindred מוֹלַדְתְּ
your ךָ
י־ל־ד shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

וּמִבֵּית

and וּ
from מִ
house בֵּית
בּ־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אָבִיךָ

father, parent אָבִי
your ךָ
אָב milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֶל־

near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

הָאָרֶץ

the הָ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר

אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

אַרְאֶךָּ

to see אַרְאֶ
your ךָ
ר־א־ה shoresh
Hifil · imperfect · 1st common singular

TRANSLATION

Hashem said to Avram, Go from your land, from your birthplace, and from your father's house, [and go] to the land that I will show you.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The parsha opens in the middle of a sentence God is speaking. There is no introduction, no account of who Avram is or why he was chosen, only an instruction, and it is an instruction to leave. Notice that it narrows as it goes: your land, then your birthplace, then your father's house. Each step is more personal than the last. The destination is withheld entirely: not a named country, just *the land that I will show you*.

RASHI ON "Go"

[Meaning:] "For your own benefit, for your own good. It is there that I will make you into a great nation, [whereas] here you will not merit having children. Also, I will make your character known to the world."

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PASUK 2 Bereishis 12:2 · 8 words

וְאֶעֶשְׂךָ לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וַאֲבָרֶכְךָ וַאֲגַדְּלָה שְׁמֶךָ וֶהְיֵה בְּרָכָה

וְאֶעֶשְׂךָ
and וְ
to make אֶעֶשְׂ
your ךָ
ע-ש-ה shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular

לְגוֹי
to / for לְ
foreign nation גוֹי
ג-ו-י shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

גָּדוֹל
great, large גָּדוֹל
ג-ד-ל shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

וַאֲבָרֶכְךָ
and וַ
to bless אֲבָרֶכְ
your ךָ
ב-ר-כ shoresh
Piel · imperfect · 1st common singular

וַאֲגַדְּלָה
and וַ
to be large אֲגַדְּלָה
ג-ד-ל shoresh
Piel · imperfect · 1st common singular

שְׁמֶךָ
name, honor שְׁמֶ
your ךָ
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וֶהְיֵה
and וֶ
to be הְיֵה
ה-י-ה shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

בְּרָכָה
benediction בְּרָכָה
ב-ר-כ shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you and make your name great; and you will be a blessing [*and you will be blessed*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

Three promises, offered as compensation for what pasuk 1 asked him to give up: descendants, blessing, and a name. The last clause turns the direction around, up to now Avram has been receiving; now he is to become a source.

PASUK 3 Bereishis 12:3 · 9 words

וַאֲבָרְכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלֶּלְךָ אָאֹר וְנִבְרְכוּ בְךָ כֹּל מִשְׁפְּחֹת הָאֲדָמָה

וַאֲבָרֲכָה
and וַ
to bless אֲבָרֲכָה
shoresh ב־ר־כ
Piel · imperfect · 1st common singular

מְבָרְכֶיךָ
to bless מְבָרְכֶי
your ךָ
shoresh ב־ר־כ
Piel · participle · masculine plural

וּמְקַלֶּלְךָ
and וּ
to curse, to treat lightly מְקַלֶּלְ
your ךָ
Piel · participle · masculine singular

אָאֹר
to execrate אָאֹר
Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular

וְנִבְרְכוּ
and וְ
to bless נִבְרְכוּ
shoresh ב־ר־כ
Nifal · perfect · 3rd common plural

בְךָ
in / with / by בְּ
your ךָ

כֹּל
all, every כֹּל
shoresh כ־ל־ל
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מִשְׁפְּחֹת
family, tribe מִשְׁפָּחוֹת
shoresh ש־פ־ה
noun · feminine · plural · construct state

הָאֲדָמָה
the הָ
soil, earth אֲדָמָה
shoresh א־ד־מ
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

I will bless those who bless you, and he who curses you, I will curse; and through you [*and because of you*], will be blessed all the families of the earth.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The promise widens past Avram and past his family. Whoever treats him well is treated well; whoever does not, is not. And the final clause reaches everybody: all the families of the earth are drawn into what has just been said.

RASHI ON "And through you, will be blessed"

There are many Aggadaic interpretations, but this is the simple meaning: A man says to his son, "May you be like Avraham." This is the meaning every [time the expression] וְנִבְרְכוּ בְךָ [appears] in Tanach. The following [expression] proves this: "Through you shall [the People of] Israel bless, saying: May Elohim make you as Ephraim and Menasheh."

Metsudah Rashi Chumash, 2009 · CC BY.

PASUK 4 Bereishis 12:4 · 17 words

וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אֵלָיו ה׳ וַיֵּלֶךְ אִתּוֹ לוֹט וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־חָמֵשׁ שָׁנִים וְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה בְּצֵאתוֹ מֵחָרָן

וַיֵּלֶךְ
and וַ
to walk, carry יֵלֶךְ
י-ל-כ shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

כַּאֲשֶׁר
like / as כַּ
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

דִּבֶּר
to speak דִּבֶּר
ד-ב-ר shoresh
Piel · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

אֵלָיו
near, toward, among אֵלֵי
his/her/its ו
preposition

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

וַיֵּלֶךְ
and וַ
to walk, carry יֵלֶךְ
י-ל-כ shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אִתּוֹ
with, by, at, among אֵת
his/her/its ו
preposition

לוֹט
Lot לוֹט
proper name

וְאַבְרָם
and וְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

בֶּן־
son, builder בֶּן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

חָמֵשׁ
five years חָמֵשׁ
ח־מ־ש shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

שָׁנִים
year שָׁנִים
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · plural · absolute state

וְשִׁבְעִים
and וְ
seventy שִׁבְעִים
שִׁבְעִים milah
adjective · both · plural

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

בְּצֵאתוֹ
in / with / by בְּ
to go out, bring out צֵאת
his/her/its וֹ
י־צ־א shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

מֵחָרָן
from מֵ
Charan חָרָן
proper name

TRANSLATION

Avram went as Hashem had told him, and Lot went with him. Avram was seventy-five years old when he left Charan.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The response takes one word. There is no argument, no question, no request for detail, the text simply says he went. The two facts appended are the ones a reader would want: who came with him, and how old he was. Seventy-five is not a young man starting out.

PASUK 5 Bereishis 12:5 · 26 words

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת־שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־לוֹט בֶּן־אָחִיו וְאֶת־כָּל־רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכָשׁוּ
וְאֶת־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ בְחָרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לָלֶכֶת אַרְצָה כְּנַעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אַרְצָה כְּנָעַן

וַיִּקַּח
and וַ
to take יִקַּח
ל-ק-ח shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

אִשְׁתּוֹ
woman אִשָּׁה
his/her/its וֹ
א-ש-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

לוֹט
Lot לוֹט
proper name

בֶּן־
son, builder בֶּן
ב-נ-ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אָחִיו
brother, sibling אָחִי
his/her/its ו
אָח milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ-ל-ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

רְכוּשָׁם
property רְכוּשׁ
their ם
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

רָכָשׁוּ
to lay up רָכְשׁוּ
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַנֶּפֶשׁ
the הַ
living creature נֶפֶשׁ
נ-פ-ש shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר־
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

עָשׂוּ
to make עָשׂוּ
ע־ש־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

בְּחָרָן
in / with / by בְּ
Charan חָרָן
proper name

וַיֵּצְאוּ
and וַ
to go out, bring out יֵצְאוּ
י־צ־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

לָלֶכֶת
to / for לָ
to walk, carry לֶכֶת
י־ל־כ shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

אַרְצָה
the earth אַרְצָ
toward ה
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

כְּנַעַן
Canaan כְּנַעַן
proper name

וַיָּבֹאוּ
and וַ
to bring to, give יָבֹאוּ
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

אַרְצָה
the earth אַרְצָ
toward ה
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

כְּנָעַן
Canaan כְּנָעַן
proper name

TRANSLATION

Avram took his wife Sarai, Lot, his brother's son, all their possessions they had acquired, and the souls [people] that they had made [converted] in Charan, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. They came to the land of Canaan.

IN PLAIN TERMS

An inventory of the household that left. Note the last item on the list: not property but people, the souls they had acquired in Charan. The pasuk then says twice that they set out for Canaan and arrived in Canaan, which is the kind of repetition that always repays attention.

RASHI ON "That they had made [converted] in Charan"

[Meaning those souls] that he brought under the protective wings of the Divine Presence. Avraham would convert the men and Sarah would convert the women, and the verse considers them as if they had "made" them. But, the plain meaning of the verse is [that this refers to] the slaves and maidservants whom they acquired for themselves, as in the verse, "He acquired all this wealth" [or,] "And Israel acquires wealth," meaning acquiring and amassing.

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PASUK 6 Bereishis 12:6 · 12 words

וַיַּעֲבֹר אַבְרָם בָּאָרֶץ עַד מְקוֹם שְׁכֶם עַד אֵלוֹן מוֹרֶה וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי אָז בָּאָרֶץ

וַיַּעֲבֹר
and וַ
to cross over יַעֲבֹר
ע-ב-ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

בָּאָרֶץ
in / with / by בְּ
the earth אָרֶץ
א-ר-צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

עַד
to, until, during עַד
preposition

מְקוֹם
place מְקוֹם
ק-ו-מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שְׁכֶם
Shechem שְׁכֶם
proper name

עַד
to, until, during עַד
preposition

אֵלוֹן
an oak or other strong tree אֵלוֹן
א-ו-ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מוֹרֶה
Moreh, a place מוֹרֶה
proper name

וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי
and וְ
the הַ
כְּנַעֲנִי
a Kenaanite or inhabitant of Kenaan
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

אָז
at that time then אָז
adverb

בָּאָרֶץ
in / with / by בְּ
the earth אָרֶץ
א-ר-צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

Avram passed [traveled] through the land until the place of Shechem, until the Plain of Moreh. The Canaanites were then in the land.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Arrival is not possession. He passes *through* the land, as far as Shechem, and the closing clause quietly notes who is living there already. The land he has just been promised belongs, at this moment, to somebody else.

RASHI ON "The Canaanites were then in the land"

He [the Canaanite] gradually conquered Eretz Yisrael from the descendants of Sheim. For it fell to the share of Sheim when Noach apportioned the land to his sons as it is said: "Malki Zedek King of Shaleim." For this reason, "Hashem said to Avram, 'to your descendants will I give this land,'" meaning, "In the future I will return it to your children who are descendants of Sheim."

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PASUK 7 Bereishis 12:7 · 16 words

וַיֵּרָא ה׳ אֶל־אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר לְזַרְעֲךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וַיִּבֶן שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה׳ הַנִּרְאֶה אֵלָיו

וַיֵּרָא
and וַ
to see יֵרָא
ר־א־ה shoresh
Nifal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לְזַרְעֲךָ
to / for לְ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעַ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֶתֵּן
to give אֶתֵּן
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

הָאָרֶץ
the הָ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

הַזֹּאת
the הַ
this one זֹאת
demonstrative pronoun

וַיִּבֶן
and וַ
to build יִּבֶן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

שָׁם
then, there שָׁם
adverb

מִזְבֵּחַ
altar מִזְבֵּחַ
ז־ב־ח shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לַה׳
to / for לַ
Hashem ה׳
proper name

הַנִּרְאֶה
the הַ
to see נִּרְאֶה
ר־א־ה shoresh
Nifal · participle · masculine singular

אֵלָיו
near, toward, among אֵלָי
his/her/its ו
preposition

TRANSLATION

Hashem appeared [*became revealed*] to Avram and said: To your descendants I will give this land. There he built an altar to [*before*] Hashem Who had appeared [*been revealed*] to him.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The first appearance, and with it the first specific promise of land, though not to Avram himself. It is promised to his descendants, which is a striking thing to say to a man who has none. His response is to build an altar.

PASUK 8 Bereishis 12:8 · 20 words

וַיַּעְתֵּק מִשָּׁם הָהָרָה מִקֶּדֶם לְבֵית־אֵל וַיֵּט אָהֳלֹה בֵּית־אֵל מִיָּם וְהָעַי מִקֶּדֶם וַיִּבֶן־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה׳ וַיִּקְרָא בְּשֵׁם ה׳

וַיַּעְתֵּק
and וַ
to move on יַעְתֵּק
Hifil · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

מִשָּׁם
from מִ
then, there שָׁם
adverb

הָהָרָה
the הָ
mountain range הָר
toward ה
ה־ר־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

מִקֶּדֶם
from מִ
east; before קֶדֶם
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לְבֵית־
to / for לְ
Beis-Eil, a place בֵּית
proper name

אֵל
Beis-Eil, a place אֵל
proper name

וַיֵּט
and וַ
to stretch or spread out יֵט
נ־ט־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אָהֳלֹה
tent אֹהֶל
his/her/its ה
א־ה־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בֵּית־
Beis-Eil, a place בֵּית
proper name

אֵל
Beis-Eil, a place אֵל
proper name

מִיָּם
from מִ
large body of water יָם
יָם milah
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְהָעַי
and וְ
the הָ
Ai, a city עַי
proper name

מִזְּבֵּחַ
altar מִזְּבֵּחַ
ז־ב־ח shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

שָׁם
then, there שָׁם
adverb

וַיִּבֶן־
and וַ
to build יִּבֶן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

מִקֶּדֶם
from מִ
east; before קֶדֶם
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

הׇ'
Hashem הׇ'
proper name

בְּשֵׁם
in / with / by בְּ
name, honor שֵׁם
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וַיִּקְרָא
and וַ
to name יִּקְרָא
ק־ר־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לַה'
to / for לַ
Hashem הׇ'
proper name

TRANSLATION

From there he moved [*ascended*] to the mountain that was east of Beis-Eil and set up his tent. Beis-Eil was to the west and Ai was to the east. There he built an altar to [*before*] Hashem, and he proclaimed the Name, [*and he prayed in the Name,*] Hashem.

IN PLAIN TERMS

A second stop and a second altar. The geography is given with care, the mountain, Beis-Eil to the west, Ai to the east, and this time the altar is accompanied by proclaiming the Name. He is not only receiving; he is publishing.

RASHI ON "His tent"

It is written אהלה [her tent]. [The reason for this is because] he first pitched his wife's tent and, afterwards, his own.

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PASUK 9 Bereishis 12:9 · 5 words

וַיִּסַּע אַבְרָם הָלוֹךְ וְנָסוֹעַ הַנֶּגְבָּה {פ}

וַיִּסַּע
and וַ
to start a journey יִסַּע
נ־ס־ע shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

הָלוֹךְ
to walk הָלוֹךְ
ה־ל־כ shoresh
Qal · infinitive absolute

וְנָסוֹעַ
and וְ
to start a journey נָסוֹעַ
נ־ס־ע shoresh
Qal · infinitive absolute

הַנֶּגְבָּה
the הַ
the south נֶגֶב
toward ה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

Avram journeyed, traveling steadily southward.

IN PLAIN TERMS

One short pasuk covering a long stretch of time. The Hebrew uses two bare verb forms side by side, and the effect is of continuous, unhurried movement southward.

RASHI ON **"Traveling steadily"**

At intervals. He would stay here a month or so, then travel and pitch his tent somewhere else. But, all his travels were southward [aimed at] going to the south of Eretz Yisrael, which is in the direction of Yerushalayim, which is in the territory of Yehudah, who took [his portion] in southern Eretz Yisrael to Mount Moriah which is his [Yehudah's] possession.

Metsudah Rashi Chumash, 2009 · CC BY.

PASUK 10 Bereishis 12:10 · 12 words

וַיְהִי רָעָב בָּאָרֶץ וַיֵּרֶד אַבְרָם מִצְרַיְמָה לָגוּר שָׁם כִּי־כָבֵד הָרָעָב בָּאָרֶץ

וַיְהִי
and וַ
to be יְהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

רָעָב
hunger רָעָב
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בָּאָרֶץ
in / with / by בְּ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

וַיֵּרֶד
and וַ
to go down יֵרֶד
י־ר־ד shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

מִצְרַיְמָה
Mitzrayim, Egypt מִצְרַיְמָ
toward ה
proper name

לָגוּר
to / for לָ
to sojourn, to stay as a guest גוּר
ג־ו־ר shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

שָׁם
then, there שָׁם
adverb

כִּי־
because, since כִּי
conjunction

כָבֵד
heavy כָבֵד
כ־ב־ד shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

הָרָעָב
the הָ
hunger רָעָב
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בָּאָרֶץ
in / with / by בְּ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

There was a famine in the land. Avram went down to Egypt to live there temporarily, for the famine was severe in the land.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The first test of the promise. He has been sent to this land, and the land cannot feed him. So he leaves it, temporarily, the pasuk is careful to say, and goes down to Egypt.

RASHI ON **"Famine in the land"**

In that land only. [This was] in order to test him [Avram] whether he will question the words of God who had told him to go to the Land of Canaan and now is forcing him to leave it.

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PASUK 11 Bereishis 12:11 · 17 words

וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לָבוֹא מִצְרָיְמָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ הִנֵּה־נָא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אִשָּׁה יְפַת־מַרְאֶה אָתְּ

וַיְהִי
and וַ
to be יְהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

כַּאֲשֶׁר
like / as כַּ
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

הִקְרִיב
to bring near הִקְרִיב
ק־ר־ב shoresh
Hifil · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

לָבוֹא
to / for לָ
to bring to, give בוֹא
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

מִצְרָיְמָה
Mitzrayim, Egypt מִצְרָיְמָ
toward ה
proper name

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

אִשְׁתּוֹ
woman אִשָּׁת
his/her/its וֹ
א-ש-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

הִנֵּה־
!look הִנֵּה
demonstrative

נָא
now please נָא
exhortation

יָדַעְתִּי
to know יָדַעְתִּי
י-ד-ע shoresh
Qal · perfect · 1st common singular

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

אִשָּׁה
woman אִשָּׁה
א-ש-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

יְפַת־
beautiful יְפַת
adjective · feminine · singular

מַרְאֶה
a view מַרְאֶה
ר-א-ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

אָתְּ
you אָתְּ
personal pronoun

TRANSLATION

As he came near and was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, Behold, I now realize that you are a woman of beautiful appearance.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The tone changes completely. For the first time Avram speaks, and what he says is fearful and practical. The verse is about a danger he can see coming as the border approaches.

RASHI ON "Behold, I now realize"

The Aggadaic explanation is: Until now he had not been aware [of her beauty] due to the modesty of both of them. But, now, he became aware of her due to an event. Another explanation: It is usual that due to the hardship of travel a person becomes unattractive, but she had remained with her beauty. But, the simple explanation of this verse is, Behold I now realize [that] the time has come to be concerned over your beauty. I have known for a long time that you are beautiful. But, now we will be coming amongst black and repulsive people, brothers of the Kushim, who are not accustomed to [seeing] a beautiful woman. An example similar to this: "See now my lords, please turn."

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PASUK 12 Bereishis 12:12 · 12 words

וְהָיָה כִּי־יִרְאוּ אֹתָךְ הַמִּצְרִים וְאָמְרוּ אִשְׁתּוֹ זֹאת וְהָרְגוּ אֹתִי וְאֹתָךְ יְחַיּוּ

וְהָיָה
and וְ
to be הָיָה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

כִּי־
because, since כִּי
conjunction

יִרְאוּ
to see יִרְאוּ
ר־א־ה shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine plural

אֹתָךְ
to אֹתָ
your ךָ
direct object marker

הַמִּצְרִים
the הַ
מִצְרִים
a Mitsrite, or inhabitant of Mitsrajim
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

וְאָמְרוּ
and וְ
to say אָמְרוּ
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

אִשְׁתּוֹ
woman אִשְׁתּ
his/her/its וֹ
א־ש־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

זֹאת
this one זֹאת
demonstrative pronoun

וְהָרְגוּ
and וְ
to kill הָרְגוּ
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

אֹתִי
to אֹתִ
my י
direct object marker

וְאֹתָךְ
and וְ
to אֹתָ
your ךָ
direct object marker

יְחַיּוּ
to live יְחַיּוּ
ח־י־ה shoresh
Piel · imperfect · 3rd masculine plural

TRANSLATION

It will happen when the Egyptians see you that they will say: This is his wife. They will kill me and let you live.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He spells out the reasoning. The danger is not to her but to him: a husband is an obstacle in a way that a brother is not.

PASUK 13 Bereishis 12:13 · 11 words

אִמְרִי־נָא אֲחֹתִי אָתְּ לְמַעַן יִיטַב־לִי בַעֲבוּרֵךְ וְחָיְתָה נַפְשִׁי בִּגְלָלֵךְ

אִמְרִי־
to say אִמְרִי
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd feminine singular

נָא
now please נָא
exhortation

אֲחֹתִי
a sister אֲחֹת
my י
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אָתְּ
you אָתְּ
personal pronoun

לְמַעַן
on account of לְמַעַן
preposition

יִיטַב־
to go well יִיטַב
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

לִי
to / for לְ
my י

בַעֲבוּרֵךְ
in / with / by בְּ
crossed עֲבוּר
your ךָ
ע־ב־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וְחָיְתָה
and וְ
to live חָיְתָה
ח־י־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd feminine singular

נַפְשִׁי
living creature נַפְשׁ
my י
נ־פ־ש shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

בִּגְלָלֵךְ
in / with / by בְּ
on account of גְּלָל
your ךָ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

Please [*Now*] say [therefore] that you are my sister, so that it will go well with me for your sake, and my life will be spared because of you [*through your words*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

The request itself, and he gives two reasons, that it will go well for him, and that he will survive. It is worth sitting with how uncomfortable this pasuk is; the text does not soften it.

PASUK 14 Bereishis 12:14 · 12 words

וַיְהִי כְּבוֹא אַבְרָם מִצְרָיְמָה וַיִּרְאוּ הַמִּצְרִים אֶת־הָאִשָּׁה כִּי־יָפָה הִוא מְאֹד

וַיְהִי
and וַ
to be יְהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

כְּבוֹא
like / as כְּ
to bring to, give בוֹא
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

מִצְרָיְמָה
Mitzrayim, Egypt מִצְרָיְמָ
toward ה
proper name

וַיִּרְאוּ
and וַ
to see יִרְאוּ
ר־א־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

הַמִּצְרִים
the הַ
מִצְרִים
a Mitsrite, or inhabitant of Mitsrajim
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

הָאִשָּׁה
the הָ
woman אִשָּׁה
א־ש־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

כִּי־
because, since כִּי
conjunction

יָפָה
beautiful יָפָה
adjective · feminine · singular

הִוא
he, it, self, this, that הִוא
personal pronoun

מְאֹד
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

TRANSLATION

And it was when Avram was entering Egypt, that the Egyptians beheld the woman, because she was very beautiful.

IN PLAIN TERMS

What he feared happens at once. The Egyptians see her the moment he enters.

RASHI ON **"And it was when Avram was entering Egypt"**

It should have said, "When they came to Egypt." But, this teaches that he hid her in a box and when they demanded the customs taxes they opened it and saw her.

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PASUK 15 Bereishis 12:15 · 12 words

וַיִּרְאוּ אֹתָהּ שָׂרֵי פַרְעֹה וַיְהַלְלוּ אֹתָהּ אֶל־פַּרְעֹה וַתֻּקַּח הָאִשָּׁה בֵּית פַּרְעֹה

וַיִּרְאוּ
and וַ
to see יִרְאוּ
ר־א־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

אֹתָהּ
to אֹתְ
his/her/its ה
direct object marker

שָׂרֵי
head person שָׂרֵי
ש־ר־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

פַרְעֹה
Pharaoh פַּרְעֹה
proper name

וַיְהַלְלוּ
and וַ
to be clear יְהַלְלוּ
Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

אֹתָהּ
to אֹתְ
his/her/its ה
direct object marker

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

פַרְעֹה
Pharaoh פַּרְעֹה
proper name

וַתֻּקַּח

and וַ
to take תֻּקַּח
לֻ-ק-ח shoresh
Qal passive · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

הָאִשָּׁה

the הָ
woman אִשָּׁה
א-ש-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

בֵּית

house בֵּית
ב-נ-ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

פַּרְעֹה

Pharaoh פַּרְעֹה
proper name

TRANSLATION

Pharaoh’s officials saw her and praised her to Pharaoh. The woman was taken to Pharaoh’s house.

IN PLAIN TERMS

It escalates past anything he had planned for. Pharaoh's officials see her, report her, and she is taken, the Hebrew verb is passive, and no one is named as doing the taking.

PASUK 16 Bereishis 12:16 · 12 words

וּלְאַבְרָם הֵיטִיב בַּעֲבוּרָהּ וַיְהִי־לוֹ צֹאן־וּבָקָר וַחֲמֹרִים וַעֲבָדִים וּשְׁפָחֹת וַאֲתֹנֹת וּגְמַלִּים

וּלְאַבְרָם
and וּ
to / for לְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

הֵיטִיב
to go well הֵיטִיב
Hifil · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

בַּעֲבוּרָהּ
in / with / by בְּ
crossed עֲבוּרָ
his/her/its הּ
ע־ב־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וַיְהִי־
and וַ
to be יְהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לוֹ
to / for לְ
his/her/its וֹ

צֹאן־
flock of sheep or goats צֹאן
צ־א־נ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

וּבָקָר
and וּ
cattle herd בָּקָר
ב־ק־ר shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

וַחֲמֹרִים
and וַ
a donkey חֲמֹרִים
ח־מ־ר shoresh
noun · both · plural · absolute state

וַעֲבָדִים
and וַ
servant עֲבָדִים
ע־ב־ד shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

וּשְׁפָחֹת
and וּ
a maidservant שְׁפָחֹת
noun · feminine · plural · absolute state

וַאֲתֹנֹת
and וַ
a female donkey אֲתֹנֹת
noun · feminine · plural · absolute state

וּגְמַלִּים
and וּ
a camel גְּמַלִּים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

TRANSLATION

He treated Avram well for her sake. He thus acquired sheep, oxen, donkeys, male and female slaves, female donkeys and camels.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The bargain Avram half-anticipated in pasuk 13 comes true in the worst possible way. He is treated well, and the list of what he receives is long and specific, and the reason given is *for her sake*.

PASUK 17 Bereishis 12:17 · 13 words

וַיְנַגַּע ה׳ אֶת־פַּרְעֹה נְגָעִים גְּדֹלִים וְאֶת־בֵּיתוֹ עַל־דְּבַר שָׂרַי אֵשֶׁת אַבְרָם

וַיְנַגַּע
and וַ
to touch, strike יְנַגַּע
נ־ג־ע shoresh
Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

פַּרְעֹה
Pharaoh פַּרְעֹה
proper name

נְגָעִים
to inflict, to strike נְגָעִים
נ־ג־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

גְּדֹלִים
great, large גְּדֹלִים
ג־ד־ל shoresh
adjective · masculine · plural

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

בֵּיתוֹ
house בֵּית
his/her/its וֹ
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עַל־
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

דְּבַר
word, matter, thing דְּבַר
ד־ב־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

אֵשֶׁת
woman אֵשֶׁת
א־ש־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

TRANSLATION

Hashem afflicted Pharaoh with severe plagues [*brought severe plagues upon Pharaoh*], and also his household, because of Sarai, Avram's wife.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The resolution comes from outside the story Avram set in motion. Neither Avram nor Sarai acts; Pharaoh and his household are struck, and the pasuk names the reason plainly.

RASHI ON **"Because of Sarai"**

[Meaning:] according to her words, she tells the angel, "Strike [him]!" and he strikes [him].

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PASUK 18 Bereishis 12:18 · 15 words

וַיִּקְרָא פַרְעֹה לְאַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר מַה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ לִּי לָמָּה לֹא־הִגַּדְתָּ לִּי כִּי אִשְׁתְּךָ הִוא

וַיִּקְרָא
and וַ
to name יִקְרָא
קָ־רָ־אָ shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

פַרְעֹה
Pharaoh פַרְעֹה
proper name

לְאַבְרָם
to / for לְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
אָ־מָ־רָ shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

מַה־
what, how, why, whatever מַה
interrogative

זֹּאת
this one זֹאת
demonstrative pronoun

עָשִׂיתָ
to make עָשִׂיתָ
עָ־שָׂ־הָ shoresh
Qal · perfect · 2nd masculine singular

לִּי
to / for לְ
my י

לָמָה
to / for לָ
what, how, why, whatever מָה
interrogative

לֹא־
not, no לֹא
negative particle

הִגַּדְתָּ
to announce, expose הִגַּדְתָּ
נ־ג־ד shoresh
Hifil · perfect · 2nd masculine singular

לִי
to / for לִ
my י

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

אִשְׁתְּךָ
woman אִשָּׁה
your ךָ
א־ש־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

הִוא
he, it, self, this, that הִוא
personal pronoun

TRANSLATION

Pharaoh summoned Avram and said: What is this that you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she is your wife?

IN PLAIN TERMS

Pharaoh's rebuke, in three questions, and the moral advantage in this exchange is entirely his. The narrative records the reproach without answering it.

PASUK 19 Bereishis 12:19 · 13 words

לָמָה אָמַרְתָּ אֲחֹתִי הִוא וָאֶקַּח אֹתָהּ לִי לְאִשָּׁה וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה אִשְׁתְּךָ קַח וָלֵךְ

לָמָה
to / for לָ
what, how, why, whatever מָה
interrogative

אָמַרְתָּ
to say אָמַרְתָּ
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · perfect · 2nd masculine singular

אֲחֹתִי
a sister אֲחֹתִ
my י
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

הִוא
he, it, self, this, that הִוא
personal pronoun

וָאֶקַּח
and וָ
to take אֶקַּח
ל־ק־ח shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 1st common singular

אֹתָהּ
to אֹתָ
his/her/its הּ
direct object marker

לִי
to / for לִ
my י

לְאִשָּׁה
to / for לְ
woman אִשָּׁה
א־ש־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

וְעַתָּה
and וְ
at this time עַתָּה
adverb

הִנֵּה
look! הִנֵּה
demonstrative

אִשְׁתְּךָ
woman אִשְׁתְּ
your ךָ
א־ש־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

קַח
to take קַח
ל־ק־ח shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

וָלֵךְ
and וָ
to walk, carry לֵךְ
י־ל־כ shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

TRANSLATION

Why did you say, She is my sister, so that I should take her to myself for a wife? Now here is your wife, take [her] and go.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The second half of the rebuke, ending in a dismissal. *Take her and go*, two imperatives, no courtesy, no offer to stay.

PASUK 20 Bereishis 12:20 · 12 words

וַיְצַו עָלָיו פַּרְעֹה אֲנָשִׁים וַיְשַׁלְּחוּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ

וַיְצַו
and וַ
to order, command יְצַו
צ-ו-ה shoresh
Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

עָלָיו
above, over, upon עָלֵי
his/her/its ו
preposition

פַּרְעֹה
Pharaoh פַּרְעֹה
proper name

אֲנָשִׁים
man, male person אֲנָשִׁים
א-י-ש shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

וַיְשַׁלְּחוּ
and וַ
to send away יְשַׁלְּחוּ
ש-ל-ח shoresh
Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

אֹתוֹ
to אֹת
his/her/its ו
direct object marker

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

אִשְׁתּוֹ
woman אִשָּׁה
his/her/its ו
א-ש-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ-ל-ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֲשֶׁר־
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

לוֹ
to / for ל
his/her/its ו

TRANSLATION

Pharaoh assigned men to him and they escorted him and his wife and all that was his.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The episode closes with an escort to the border. Avram leaves Egypt with his wife and everything that was his; the chapter ends where it began, with a man on a road.

CHAPTER 11

Bereishis Perek 13

Avram and Lot separate

✦ ✦ ✦

PASUK 1 Bereishis 13:1 · 11 words

וַיַּעַל אַבְרָם מִמִּצְרַיִם הוּא וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ וְלוֹט עִמּוֹ הַנֶּגְבָּה

וַיַּעַל
and וַ
to go up יַעַל
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

מִמִּצְרַיִם
from מִ
Mitzrayim, Egypt מִצְרַיִם
proper name

הוּא
he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

וְאִשְׁתּוֹ
and וְ
woman אִשָּׁה
his/her/its וֹ
אִשָּׁה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

וְכָל־
and וְ
all, every כָּל
כָּל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֲשֶׁר־
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

לוֹ
to / for לְ
his/her/its וֹ

הַנֶּגְבָּה

the הַ
the south נֶגֶב
toward ה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

עִמּוֹ

with, along with עִמּ
his/her/its וֹ
ע-מ-מ shoresh
preposition

וְלוֹט

and וְ
Lot לוֹט
proper name

TRANSLATION

Avram went up from Egypt; he, his wife, and all that he had, together with Lot into the south.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Avram comes back up the same road he went down, and the Torah lists the household again, him, his wife, everything he owns, and Lot. The list is almost word for word the one in 12:5, except that now it is a return rather than a departure.

RASHI ON **"Avram went up … into the south"**

[Meaning:] to arrive at the south of Eretz Yisrael, as it was stated above, "traveling steadily southward," [meaning:] to Mount Moriah. Nevertheless, when one travels from Egypt to the Land of Canaan, he travels from south to north, for Egypt is south of Eretz Yisrael as can be shown by the "journeys" and at the boundaries of Eretz Yisrael.

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PASUK 2 Bereishis 13:2 · 6 words

וְאַבְרָם כָּבֵד מְאֹד בַּמִּקְנֶה בַּכֶּסֶף וּבַזָּהָב

וְאַבְרָם
and וְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

כָּבֵד
to be heavy כָּבֵד
כ־ב־ד shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

מְאֹד
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

בַּמִּקְנֶה
in / with / by בַּ
property, livestock מִקְנֶה
ק־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בַּכֶּסֶף
in / with / by בַּ
silver, money כֶּסֶף
כ־ס־פ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וּבַזָּהָב
and וּ
in / with / by בַּ
gold, yellow זָהָב
ז־ה־ב shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

Avram was very wealthy in livestock, silver and gold.

IN PLAIN TERMS

One short pasuk of accounting. The wealth he left Egypt with is stated flatly, without praise or unease, and it is the fact that drives everything in this perek: what follows happens because there is now too much to share.

RASHI ON "Very wealthy"

[I.e.,] he was laden with baggage.

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PASUK 3 Bereishis 13:3 · 19 words

וַיֵּלֶךְ לְמַסָּעָיו מִנֶּגֶב וְעַד־בֵּית־אֵל עַד־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־הָיָה שָׁם אָהֳלֹה בַּתְּחִלָּה בֵּין בֵּית־אֵל וּבֵין הָעָי

וַיֵּלֶךְ
and וַ
to walk, carry יֵּלֶךְ
shoresh י-ל-כ
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לְמַסָּעָיו
to / for לְ
a departure מַסָּעַי
his/her/its ו
shoresh נ-ס-ע
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

מִנֶּגֶב
from מִ
the south נֶגֶב
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְעַד־
and וְ
to, until, during עַד
preposition

בֵּית־
Beis-Eil, a place בֵּית
proper name

אֵל
Beis-Eil, a place אֵל
proper name

עַד־
to, until, during עַד
preposition

הַמָּקוֹם
the הַ
place מָקוֹם
shoresh ק-ו-מ
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר־
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

הָיָה
to be הָיָה
shoresh ה-י-ה
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

שָׁם
then, there שָׁם
adverb

אהלה
tent אהל
his/her/its ה
shoresh א-ה-ל
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בֵּית־
Beis-Eil, a place בֵּית
proper name

בֵּין
between, either...or בֵּין
preposition

בַּתְּחִלָּה
in / with / by בַּ
a commencement תְּחִלָּה
ח־ל־ל shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

אָהֳלוֹ
tent אֹהֶל
his/her/its וֹ
א־ה־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הָעָי
the הָ
Ai, a city עָי
proper name

וּבֵין
and וּ
between, either...or בֵּין
preposition

אֵל
Beis-Eil, a place אֵל
proper name

TRANSLATION

He continued on his travels from the south to Beis-Eil, until the place where he originally had [*set up*] his tent, between Beis-Eil and Ai.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He does not settle where he landed. He retraces his route in stages, back to the exact spot between Beis-Eil and Ai where he had pitched his tent before Egypt, returning to where he was interrupted rather than starting somewhere new.

RASHI ON "He continued on his travels"

[This indicates] that when he returned from Egypt to the Land of Canaan he went and lodged in those inns in which he had lodged on his way to Egypt. This teaches that good manners [require] that a person not change his place of lodging. Another explanation: On his return trip he paid the debts he incurred.

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PASUK 4 Bereishis 13:4 · 12 words

אֶל־מְקוֹם הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה שָׁם בָּרִאשֹׁנָה וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם אַבְרָם בְּשֵׁם ה׳

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

מְקוֹם
place מְקוֹם
ק־ו־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
the הַ
altar מִזְבֵּחַ
ז־ב־ח shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר־
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

עָשָׂה
to make עָשָׂה
ע־ש־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

שָׁם
then, there שָׁם
adverb

בָּרִאשֹׁנָה
in / with / by בָּ
first, foremost רִאשֹׁנָה
ר־א־ש shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

וַיִּקְרָא
and וַ
to name יִקְרָא
ק־ר־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

שָׁם
then, there שָׁם
adverb

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

בְּשֵׁם
in / with / by בְּ
name, honor שֵׁם
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

TRANSLATION

To the site of the altar which he made there at first; and there Avram called [*prayed*] in the Name of Hashem.

IN PLAIN TERMS

And specifically to the altar. The point of retracing the journey was to come back to the place where he had called in the Name of Hashem, in 12:8. The famine broke off something, and he is resuming it.

RASHI ON **”Which he made there at first, and he called“**

And where “Avram called in the Name of Hashem.” It can also be taken to mean, that “He now called there in the Name of Hashem.”

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PASUK 5 Bereishis 13:5 · 9 words

וְגַם־לְלוֹט הַהֹלֵךְ אֶת־אַבְרָם הָיָה צֹאן־וּבָקָר וְאֹהָלִים

וְגַם־
and וְ
even, also, too גַם
accusative particle

לְלוֹט
to / for לְ
Lot לוֹט
proper name

הַהֹלֵךְ
the הַ
to walk הֹלֵךְ
ה־ל־כ shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

אֶת־
with, by, at, among אֶת
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

הָיָה
to be הָיָה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

צֹאן־
flock of sheep or goats צֹאן
צ־א־נ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

וּבָקָר
and וּ
cattle herd בָקָר
ב־ק־ר shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

וְאֹהָלִים
and וְ
tent אֹהָלִים
א־ה־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

TRANSLATION

Lot who accompanied Avram also had sheep, cattle and tents.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Lot's wealth gets its own pasuk. Until now Lot has appeared only as part of Avram's household; here he has flocks and tents of his own. He has become a separate establishment, which is the first sign of what is coming.

RASHI ON **"Who accompanied Avram"**

What brought this about? The fact that he traveled with Avram.

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PASUK 6 Bereishis 13:6 · 14 words

וְלֹא־נָשָׂא אֹתָם הָאָרֶץ לָשֶׁבֶת יַחְדָּו כִּי־הָיָה רְכוּשָׁם רָב וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לָשֶׁבֶת יַחְדָּו

וְלֹא־
and וְ
not, no לֹא
negative particle

נָשָׂא
to lift, carry נָשָׂא
נ־ש־א shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

אֹתָם
to אֹתָ
their ם
direct object marker

הָאָרֶץ
the הָ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

לָשֶׁבֶת
to / for לָ
to sit, dwell, remain שֶׁבֶת
י־ש־ב shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

יַחְדָּו
together יַחְדָּו
adverb

כִּי־
because, since כִּי
conjunction

הָיָה
to be הָיָה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

יָכְלוּ
to be able יָכְלוּ
ל-כ-י shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

וְלֹא
and וְ
not, no לֹא
negative particle

רָב
abundant, great רָב
ר-ב-ב shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

רְכוּשָׁם
property רְכוּשָׁ
their ם
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

יַחְדָּו
together יַחְדָּו
adverb

לָשֶׁבֶת
to / for לָ
to sit, dwell, remain שֶׁבֶת
ב-ש-י shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

TRANSLATION

The land was unable to support them that they might dwell together, for their wealth was so great that they were unable to dwell together.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The reason given is not bad character but arithmetic: the land could not carry both of them. The pasuk says it twice, they could not dwell together, their wealth was too great, they could not dwell together, closing off any other explanation.

RASHI ON "was unable to support them [It]"

[Meaning] It could not provide [enough] pasture for their cattle. The phrase is abbreviated and an additional [word] is needed: "The pasture of the land could not support them." The text, therefore, reads וְלֹא נָשָׂא in the masculine form.

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PASUK 7 Bereishis 13:7 · 15 words

וַיְהִי־רִיב בֵּין רֹעֵי מִקְנֵה־אַבְרָם וּבֵין רֹעֵי מִקְנֵה־לוֹט וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַפְּרִזִּי אָז יֹשֵׁב בָּאָרֶץ

וַיְהִי־
and וַ
to be יְהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

רִיב
a contest רִיב
noun · both · singular · absolute state

בֵּין
between, either...or בֵּין
preposition

רֹעֵי
pastoral רֹעֵי
ר־ע־ה shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine plural

מִקְנֵה־
property, livestock מִקְנֶה
ק־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

וּבֵין
and וּ
between, either...or בֵּין
preposition

רֹעֵי
pastoral רֹעֵי
ר־ע־ה shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine plural

מִקְנֵה־
property, livestock מִקְנֶה
ק־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

לוֹט
Lot לוֹט
proper name

וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי
and וְ
the הַ
כְּנַעֲנִי
a Kenaanite or inhabitant of Kenaan
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְהַפְּרִזִּי
and וְ
the הַ
a Perizzite פְּרִזִּי
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

אָז
at that time then אָז
adverb

יֹשֵׁב
to sit, dwell, remain יֹשֵׁב
י־ש־ב shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

בָּאָרֶץ
in / with / by בְּ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

There was a quarrel between the herdsmen of Avram's flocks and the herdsmen of Lot's flocks. The Canaanites and the Perizzites were then living in the land.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The quarrel is between the herdsmen, not the two men. And the pasuk immediately notes who else is in the land: the Canaanite and the Perizzite were there. A dispute between Avram's people and Lot's is taking place in front of an audience.

RASHI ON "There was a quarrel"

Because Lot's shepherds were wicked and grazed their animals in others' fields. [When] Avram's shepherds admonished them for [committing] robbery, they responded: "The land was given to Avram who has no heir. Lot, his nephew, is his heir and, [therefore,] this does not constitute robbery." But, the verse states: "The Canaanites and Perizzites were then living in the land," so that Avram did not yet possess it.

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PASUK 8 Bereishis 13:8 · 18 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל־לוֹט אַל־נָא תְהִי מְרִיבָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין רֹעַי וּבֵין רֹעֶיךָ כִּי־אֲנָשִׁים אַחִים אֲנָחְנוּ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

לוֹט
Lot לוֹט
proper name

אַל־
not, nothing אַל
negative particle

נָא
now please נָא
exhortation

תְּהִי
to be תְּהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · jussive · 3rd feminine singular

מְרִיבָה
quarrel מְרִיבָה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

בֵּינִי
between, either...or בֵּינִ
my י
preposition

וּבֵינֶיךָ
and וּ
between, either...or בֵּינֵי
your ךָ
preposition

וּבֵין
and וּ
between, either...or בֵּין
preposition

רֹעַי
pastoral רֹעַ
my י
ר־ע־ה shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine plural

וּבֵין
and וּ
between, either...or בֵּין
preposition

רֹעֶיךָ
pastoral רֹעֵי
your ךָ
ר־ע־ה shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine plural

כִּי־
because, since כִּי
conjunction

אֲנָשִׁים
man, male person אֲנָשִׁים
א־י־ש shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אַחִים
brother, sibling אַחִים
אָח milah
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אֲנַחְנוּ
we אֲנַחְנוּ
personal pronoun

TRANSLATION

Avram said to Lot: Please [*Now*], let there not be strife between me and you, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are kinsmen.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Avram speaks first and gives up his position before any argument develops. Note what he appeals to, not who is right, and not his seniority, but that they are kinsmen. He asks for no ruling on the quarrel at all.

RASHI ON "We are kinsmen"

[Here meaning:] relatives. The Midrashic explanation is: they had similar facial features.

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PASUK 9 Bereishis 13:9 · 13 words

הֲלֹא כָל־הָאָרֶץ לְפָנֶיךָ הִפָּרֶד נָא מֵעָלַי אִם־הַשְּׂמֹאל וְאֵימִנָה וְאִם־הַיָּמִין וְאַשְׂמְאִילָה

הֲלֹא
(question) הֲ
not, no לֹא
negative particle

כָל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הָאָרֶץ
the הָ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

לְפָנֶיךָ
to / for לְ
face, before פָּנֵי
your הָ
פ־נ־ה shoresh
noun · both · plural · construct state

הִפָּרֶד
to spread out, to burst out הִפָּרֶד
Nifal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

נָא
now please נָא
exhortation

מֵעָלַי
from מֵ
above, over, upon עָלָ
my י
preposition

אִם־
whether, if, oh that אִם
conjunction

הַשְּׂמֹאל
the הַ
dark שְׂמֹאל
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְאֵימִנָה
and וְ
to go to the right אֵימִנָה
י־מ־נ shoresh
Hifil · cohortative · 1st common singular

וְאִם־
and וְ
whether, if, oh that אִם
conjunction

הַיָּמִין
the הַ
the right hand, the south יָמִין
י־מ־נ shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

וְאַשְׂמְאִילָה
and וְ
to go to the left אַשְׂמְאִילָה
Hifil · cohortative · 1st common singular

TRANSLATION

Is not all the land before you? Please [*Now*] separate from me, if [you go] to the left [*north*], I [will go] to the right [*south*], and if [you go] to the right [*south*], I [will go] to the left [*north*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

He offers Lot the whole choice and takes whatever is left. "If you go left, I go right; if you go right, I go left." The man who was promised this land is the one who lets the other pick first.

RASHI ON "If [you go] to the left, I [will go] to the right"

[Meaning:] wherever you may settle I will not go far from you and I will stand by you [to serve] as a shield and as a help. In the end he, indeed, needed him as it is said, "When Avram heard that his kinsman was taken captive."

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PASUK 10 Bereishis 13:10 · 25 words

וַיִּשָּׂא־לוֹט אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיַּרְא אֶת־כָּל־כִּכַּר הַיַּרְדֵּן כִּי כֻלָּהּ מַשְׁקֶה לִפְנֵי שַׁחֵת ה׳
אֶת־סְדֹם וְאֶת־עֲמֹרָה כְּגַן־ה׳ כְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם בֹּאֲכָה צֹעַר

וַיִּשָּׂא־
and וַ
to lift, carry יִשָּׂא
נ־ש־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לוֹט
Lot לוֹט
proper name

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

עֵינָיו
eye עַיִן
his/her/its ו
ע־י־נ shoresh
noun · both · dual · construct state

וַיַּרְא
and וַ
to see יַרְא
ר־א־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

כִּכַּר
כִּכַּר
the plain, the surrounding region
noun · both · singular · construct state

הַיַּרְדֵּן
the הַ
the Yarden יַרְדֵּן
proper name

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

כֻּלָּהּ
all, every כֹּל
his/her/its הּ
כ-ל-ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מַשְׁקֶה
causing to drink מַשְׁקֶה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לִפְנֵי
to / for לְ
face, before פְּנֵי
פ-נ-ה shoresh
noun · both · plural · construct state

שַׁחֵת
to decay שַׁחֵת
Piel · infinitive construct

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

עֲמֹרָה
Amorah עֲמֹרָה
proper name

כְּגַן־
like / as כְּ
a garden גַּן
noun · both · singular · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

כְּאֶרֶץ
like / as כְּ
the earth אֶרֶץ
א-ר-צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

מִצְרַיִם
Mitzrayim, Egypt מִצְרַיִם
proper name

בֹּאֲכָה
to bring to, give בֹּאֲ
your כָה
ב-ו-א shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

צֹעַר
Zoar, a city צֹעַר
proper name

TRANSLATION

Lot raised his eyes and saw the entire Jordan Plain, that it was [*an*] abundantly watered [*place*]; before Hashem destroyed Sedom and Amorah, it was like Hashem's garden, like the land of Egypt, going towards Zoar.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Lot looks, and the Torah shows us what he saw: well-watered land, like Hashem's garden, like Egypt. Then it adds the detail he could not have seen, this was before Sedom was destroyed. The reader is told how the choice ends before Lot makes it.

RASHI ON **”That it was abundantly watered“**

A land of water streams.

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PASUK 11 Bereishis 13:11 · 14 words

וַיִּבְחַר־לוֹ לוֹט אֵת כָּל־כִּכַּר הַיַּרְדֵּן וַיִּסַּע לוֹט מִקֶּדֶם וַיִּפָּרְדוּ אִישׁ מֵעַל אָחִיו

וַיִּבְחַר־
and וַ
to try יִבְחַר
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לוֹ
to / for ל
his/her/its וֹ

לוֹט
Lot לוֹט
proper name

אֵת
to אֵת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

כִּכַּר
כִּכַּר
the plain, the surrounding region
noun · both · singular · construct state

הַיַּרְדֵּן
the הַ
the Yarden יַרְדֵּן
proper name

וַיִּסַּע
and וַ
to start a journey יִסַּע
נ־ס־ע shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לוֹט
Lot לוֹט
proper name

אִישׁ

man, male person אִישׁ

א־י־ש shoresh

noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וַיִּפָּרְדוּ

and וַ

to spread out, to burst out יִפָּרְדוּ

Nifal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

מִקֶּדֶם

from מִ

east; before קֶדֶם

noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

אָחִיו

brother, sibling אָחִי

his/her/its ו

אָח milah

noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מֵעַל

from מֵ

above, over, upon עַל

preposition

TRANSLATION

Lot chose for himself the entire Jordan Plain; Lot journeyed from the east [*before*], and they separated one from another.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He takes the whole plain, and the two separate. The wording is deliberately mutual, "a man from his brother", rather than Lot being sent away.

RASHI ON **"Plain"**

[Means] "plain" as the Targum translates.

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PASUK 12 Bereishis 13:12 · 11 words

אַבְרָם יָשַׁב בְּאֶרֶץ־כְּנָעַן וְלוֹט יָשַׁב בְּעָרֵי הַכִּכָּר וַיֶּאֱהַל עַד־סְדֹם

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

יָשַׁב
to sit, dwell, remain יָשַׁב
י־ש־ב shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

בְּאֶרֶץ־
in / with / by בְּ
the earth אֶרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

כְּנָעַן
Canaan כְּנָעַן
proper name

וְלוֹט
and וְ
Lot לוֹט
proper name

יָשַׁב
to sit, dwell, remain יָשַׁב
י־ש־ב shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

בְּעָרֵי
in / with / by בְּ
city עָרֵי
ע־ו־ר shoresh
noun · feminine · plural · construct state

הַכִּכָּר
the הַ
כִּכָּר
the plain, the surrounding region
noun · both · singular · absolute state

וַיֶּאֱהַל
and וַ
to tent יֶאֱהַל
א־ה־ל shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

עַד־
to, until, during עַד
preposition

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

TRANSLATION

Avram lived in the land of Canaan; and Lot lived in the cities of the Plain, setting up his tents as far as Sedom.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The two settlements are set side by side: Avram in the land of Canaan, Lot in the cities of the plain. The last clause moves him further, he pitched his tents as far as Sedom.

RASHI ON **"Setting up his tents"**

[Meaning:] he pitched tents for his shepherds and for his cattle as far as Sedom.

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PASUK 13 Bereishis 13:13 · 6 words

וְאַנְשֵׁי סְדֹם רָעִים וְחַטָּאִים לַה׳ מְאֹד

וְאַנְשֵׁי
and וְ
man, male person אַנְשֵׁי
א־י־ש shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

רָעִים
bad or evil רָעִים
ר־ע־ע shoresh
adjective · masculine · plural

וְחַטָּאִים
and וְ
חַטָּאִים
a criminal, or one accounted guilty
ח־ט־א shoresh
adjective · masculine · plural

לַה׳
to / for לַ
Hashem ה׳
proper name

מְאֹד
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

TRANSLATION

The people of Sedom were wicked [*with their property*] and sinful [*with their bodies*] towards [*before*] Hashem, exceedingly.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Having told us where Lot settled, the Torah tells us what kind of place it was. The verdict is unqualified and is placed immediately after his choice, with no comment connecting the two.

RASHI ON **"The people of Sedom were wicked"**

And yet Lot did not refrain from residing with them. Our Sages learned from here: "The names of the wicked shall rot."

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PASUK 14 Bereishis 13:14 · 21 words

וַה׳ אָמַר אֶל־אַבְרָם אַחֲרֵי הִפָּרֶד־לוֹט מֵעִמּוֹ שָׂא נָא עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה מִן־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה שָׁם צָפֹנָה וָנֶגְבָּה וָקֵדְמָה וָיָמָּה

וַה׳
and וַ
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אָמַר
to say אָמַר
א-מ-ר shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

אַחֲרֵי
after אַחֲרֵי
preposition

הִפָּרֶד־
to spread out, to burst out הִפָּרֶד
Nifal · infinitive construct

לוֹט
Lot לוֹט
proper name

מֵעִמּוֹ
from מֵ
with, along with עִמּ
his/her/its וֹ
ע-מ-מ shoresh
preposition

שָׂא
to lift, carry שָׂא
נ-ש-א shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

נָא
now please נָא
exhortation

עֵינֶיךָ
eye עֵינֵי
your ךָ
ע-י-נ shoresh
noun · both · dual · construct state

וּרְאֵה
and וּ
to see רְאֵה
ר-א-ה shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

מִן־
from, out of מִן
preposition

הַמָّקוֹם
the הַ
place מָקוֹם
ק-ו-מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר־

אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

אַתָּה

you אַתָּה
personal pronoun

שָׁם

then, there שָׁם
adverb

צָפֹנָה

hidden צָפֹן
toward ה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

וָנֶגְבָּה

and וָ
the south נֶגֶב
toward ה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וָקֵדְמָה

and וָ
east; before קֵדֶם
toward ה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וָיָמָּה

and וָ
large body of water יָם
toward ה
יָם milah
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

Hashem said to Avram after Lot had separated from him: Raise your eyes and look about from the place where you are, to the north, to the south to the east and to the west.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Hashem speaks the moment Lot is gone, "after Lot had separated from him." Avram is told to raise his eyes and look, the same verb used of Lot in pasuk 10, but in all four directions rather than at one attractive plain.

RASHI ON "After Lot had separated"

As long as the wicked person was with him, the Word [of God] withdrew from him. (And above when Lot was [still] with him and [yet] it is written: “And God appeared to Avram,” [we must assume that] at that time he [Lot] was [still righteous]).

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PASUK 15 Bereishis 13:15 · 12 words

כִּי אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־אַתָּה רֹאֶה לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה וּלְזַרְעֲךָ עַד־עוֹלָם

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הָאָרֶץ
the הָ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר־
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

אַתָּה
you אַתָּה
personal pronoun

רֹאֶה
to see רֹאֶה
ר־א־ה shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

לְךָ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

אֶתְּנֶנָּה
to give אֶתְּנֶ
his/her/its נָּה
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular

וּלְזַרְעֲךָ
and וּ
to / for לְ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעַ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עַד־
to, until, during עַד
preposition

עוֹלָם
eternity, always עוֹלָם
ע־ל־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

For all the land that you see I give to you and to your descendants forever.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The promise is enlarged. In 12:7 the land was for his descendants; here it is to you and to your descendants, and forever. He has just given away first choice of land, and is told that all of what he can see is his.

PASUK 16 Bereishis 13:16 · 16 words

וְשַׂמְתִּי אֶת־זַרְעֲךָ כַּעֲפַר הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אִם־יוּכַל אִישׁ לִמְנוֹת אֶת־עֲפַר הָאָרֶץ גַּם־זַרְעֲךָ יִמָּנֶה

וְשַׂמְתִּי
and וְ
to put שַׂמְתִּי
שׁ־ו־מ shoresh
Qal · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

זַרְעֲךָ
seed, plant, offspring זֶרַע
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

כַּעֲפַר
like / as כַּ
dust עָפָר
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הָאָרֶץ
the הָ
the earth אֶרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

אִם־
whether, if, oh that אִם
conjunction

יוּכַל
to be able יוּכַל
י־כ־ל shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

אִישׁ
man, male person אִישׁ
א־י־ש shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לִמְנוֹת
to / for לְ
to weigh out מָנוֹת
Qal · infinitive construct

גַּם־
even, also, too גַּם
accusative particle

הָאָרֶץ
the הָ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

עָפָר
dust עָפָר
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

יִמָּנֶה
to weigh out יִמָּנֶה
Nifal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

זַרְעֲךָ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעַ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

I will make your descendants [*numerous*] as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can count the dust of the earth, then your descendants too will be countable [*just as it is impossible for a man to count the dust of the earth, so too your descendants will not be countable*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

The image is dust, not stars, not sand, but the thing he is standing on and being promised. The pasuk defines its own comparison: if a man could count the dust, your descendants could be counted too.

RASHI ON "So that if a man can"

Just as it is impossible for dust to be counted so, too, your progeny will not be counted.

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PASUK 17 Bereishis 13:17 · 8 words

קוּם הִתְהַלֵּךְ בָּאָרֶץ לְאָרְכָּהּ וּלְרָחְבָּהּ כִּי לְךָ אֶתְּנֶנָּה

קוּם
to rise קוּם
ק־ו־מ shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

הִתְהַלֵּךְ
to walk הִתְהַלֵּךְ
ה־ל־כ shoresh
Hitpael · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

בָּאָרֶץ
in / with / by בְּ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

לְאָרְכָּהּ
to / for לְ
length אָרֶךְ
his/her/its הּ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וּלְרָחְבָּהּ
and וּ
to / for לְ
width רֹחַב
his/her/its הּ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

לְךָ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

אֶתְּנֶנָּה
to give אֶתֵּן
his/her/its נָּה
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular

TRANSLATION

Rise, walk through the land, its length and breadth, for to you I will give it.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He is told to walk the land, its length and its breadth. Not to take it or settle it, to go through it, as an act that acknowledges the gift.

PASUK 18 Bereishis 13:18 · 12 words

וַיֶּאֱהַל אַבְרָם וַיָּבֹא וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאֵלֹנֵי מַמְרֵא אֲשֶׁר בְּחֶבְרוֹן וַיִּבֶן־שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַה׳ {פ}

וַיֶּאֱהַל
and וַ
to tent יֶאֱהַל
א־ה־ל shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

וַיָּבֹא
and וַ
to bring to, give בָּא
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

וַיֵּשֶׁב
and וַ
to sit, dwell, remain יֶשֶׁב
י־ש־ב shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

בְּאֵלֹנֵי
in / with / by בְּ
an oak or other strong tree אֵלֹנֵי
א־ו־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

מַמְרֵא
Mamrei מַמְרֵא
proper name

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

בְּחֶבְרוֹן
in / with / by בְּ
Chevron חֶבְרוֹן
proper name

וַיִּבֶן־
and וַ
to build יִבֶן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

שָׁם
then, there שָׁם
adverb

מִזְבֵּחַ
altar מִזְבֵּחַ
ז־ב־ח shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לַה׳
to / for לַ
Hashem ה׳
proper name

TRANSLATION

Avram set up his tent, and he came and settled in the Plains of Mamrei which are in Chevron, and he built there an altar to [*before*] Hashem.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The perek ends as it began, with a move and an altar. He settles at Mamrei in Chevron and builds there, the third altar in two perakim, each one marking where he stopped.

RASHI ON

”Mamrei“

The name of a person.

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CHAPTER 12

Bereishis Perek 14

The war of the kings, and Malki-Tzedek

✦ ✦ ✦

PASUK 1 Bereishis 14:1 · 14 words

וַיְהִי בִּימֵי אַמְרָפֶל מֶלֶךְ־שִׁנְעָר אַרְיוֹךְ מֶלֶךְ אֶלָּסָר כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר מֶלֶךְ עֵילָם וְתִדְעָל מֶלֶךְ גּוֹיִם

וַיְהִי
and וַ
to be יְהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

בִּימֵי
in / with / by בְּ
day יְמֵי
י־ו־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

אַמְרָפֶל
Amraphel, a king אַמְרָפֶל
proper name

מֶלֶךְ־
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שִׁנְעָר
Shinar, a kingdom שִׁנְעָר
proper name

אַרְיוֹךְ
Aryoch, a king אַרְיוֹךְ
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֶלָּסָר
Elasar, a kingdom אֶלָּסָר
proper name

כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר
Kedorlaomer, a king כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עֵילָם
Eilam, a kingdom עֵילָם
proper name

וְתִדְעָל
and וְ
Tidal, a king תִּדְעָל
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

גּוֹיִם
a nation גּוֹיִם
ג־ו־י shoresh
proper name

TRANSLATION

This happened in the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar [*Babylon*], Aryoch, king of Elasar, Kedorlaomer, king of Ailam, and Tidal, king of Goyim [*king of peoples*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

The parsha suddenly changes register. Four kings are named with their kingdoms, in the manner of a chronicle, and Avram is not mentioned at all. This is the only war narrative in Lech Lecha, and it opens as though from an outside record.

RASHI ON "Amraphel"

He is Nimrod who told Avraham, "Jump into the fiery furnace."

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PASUK 2 Bereishis 14:2 · 21 words

עָשׂוּ מִלְחָמָה אֶת־בֶּרַע מֶלֶךְ סְדֹם וְאֶת־בִּרְשַׁע מֶלֶךְ עֲמֹרָה שִׁנְאָב מֶלֶךְ אַדְמָה וְשֶׁמְאֵבֶר מֶלֶךְ (צביים) [צְבוֹיִם] וּמֶלֶךְ בֶּלַע הִיא־צֹעַר

עָשׂוּ
to make עָשׂוּ
ע־ש־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

מִלְחָמָה
a battle מִלְחָמָה
ל־ח־מ shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

אֶת־
with, by, at, among אֶת
preposition

בֶּרַע
Bera, a king בֶּרַע
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

וְאֶת־
and וְ
with, by, at, among אֶת
preposition

בִּרְשַׁע
Birsha, a king בִּרְשַׁע
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עֲמֹרָה
Amorah עֲמֹרָה
proper name

שִׁנְאָב
Shinav, a king שִׁנְאָב
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַדְמָה
Admah, a city אַדְמָה
proper name

וְשֶׁמְאֵבֶר
and וְ
Shemeiver, a king שֶׁמְאֵבֶר
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

צביים
Tzevoyim, a city צביים
proper name

הִיא־
he, it, self, this, that הִיא
personal pronoun

בֶּלַע
Bela, a city בֶּלַע
proper name

וּמֶלֶךְ
and וּ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

צְבוֹיִים
Tzevoyim, a city צְבוֹיִים
proper name

צֹעַר
Zoar, a city צֹעַר
proper name

TRANSLATION

They waged war against Bera, king of Sedom, Birsha, king of Amorah, Shinav, king of Admah, Shemeiver, king of Tzevoyim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Five more kings, named against the first four. The cities will matter later, Sedom and Amorah are on this list, and so is the city Lot has just moved toward.

RASHI ON **"Bera"**

He was evil towards God and evil towards mankind.

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PASUK 3 Bereishis 14:3 · 9 words

כָּל־אֵלֶּה חָבְרוּ אֶל־עֵמֶק הַשִּׂדִּים הוּא יָם הַמֶּלַח

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֵלֶּה
these or those אֵלֶּה
demonstrative pronoun

חָבְרוּ
to join חָבְרוּ
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

עֵמֶק
a valley עֵמֶק
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הַשִּׂדִּים
the הַ
Siddim, a valley שִׂדִּים
proper name

הוּא
he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

יָם
large body of water יָם
יָם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הַמֶּלַח
the הַ
powder מֶלַח
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

All these joined together [*assembled*] at the valley of Siddim [*the plain of the fields*], which is [now] [*the place of*] the Salt Sea.

IN PLAIN TERMS

All five allied at the Valley of Siddim. The pasuk pauses to tell the reader what that place is now: the Salt Sea. The landscape of the story no longer exists.

RASHI ON

”Valley of Siddim“

It was so called because of the many fields that were in it. There are many [other] Midrashic interpretations.

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PASUK 4 Bereishis 14:4 · 10 words

שְׁתֵּים עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה עָבְדוּ אֶת־כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר וּשְׁלֹשׁ־עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה מָרָדוּ

שְׁתֵּים
two שְׁתֵּים
שְׁנַיִם milah
adjective · feminine · dual

עֶשְׂרֵה
ten, teens עֶשְׂרֵה
ע־ש־ר shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

עָבְדוּ
to work, serve עָבְדוּ
ע־ב־ד shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר
Kedorlaomer, a king כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר
proper name

וּשְׁלֹשׁ־
and וּ
three שְׁלֹשׁ
שָׁלוֹשׁ milah
adjective · feminine · singular

עֶשְׂרֵה
ten, teens עֶשְׂרֵה
ע־ש־ר shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

מָרָדוּ
to rebel מָרָדוּ
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

TRANSLATION

[For] twelve years they had served Kedorlaomer, and for thirteen years they rebelled.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The cause of the war in one line of bookkeeping: twelve years of service, and in the thirteenth they rebelled. No motive is offered beyond the arithmetic.

RASHI ON "twelve years they had served [For]"

These five kings [served] Kedorlaomer.

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PASUK 5 Bereishis 14:5 · 20 words

וּבְאַרְבַּע עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה בָּא כְדָרְלָעֹמֶר וְהַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ וַיַּכּוּ אֶת־רְפָאִים
בְּעַשְׁתְּרֹת קַרְנַיִם וְאֶת־הַזּוּזִים בְּהָם וְאֵת הָאֵימִים בְּשָׁוֵה קִרְיָתָיִם

וּבְאַרְבַּע
and וּ
in / with / by בְּ
four אַרְבַּע
ר־ב־ע shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

עֶשְׂרֵה
ten, teens עֶשְׂרֵה
ע־ש־ר shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

בָּא
to bring to, give בָּא
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

כְדָרְלָעֹמֶר
Kedorlaomer, a king כְדָרְלָעֹמֶר
proper name

וְהַמְּלָכִים
and וְ
the הַ
king מְלָכִים
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

אִתּוֹ
with, by, at, among אִת
his/her/its וֹ
preposition

וַיַּכּוּ
and וַ
to strike יַכּוּ
נ־כ־ה shoresh
Hifil · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

רְפָאִים
a giant רְפָאִים
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בְּעַשְׁתְּרֹת
in / with / by בְּ
עַשְׁתְּרֹת
Ashteros Karnayim, a place
proper name

קַרְנַיִם
Ashteroth-Karnaim קַרְנַיִם
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַזּוּזִים
the הַ
the Zuzim, a people זוּזִים
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בְּהָם
in / with / by בְּ
Ham, a place הָם
proper name

וְאֵת
and וְ
to אֵת
direct object marker

הָאֵימִים
the הָ
אֵימִים
Emim, an early Canaanitish tribe
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בְּשָׁוֵה
in / with / by בְּ
Shaveh, a valley שָׁוֵה
proper name

קִרְיָתָיִם
Kiryasayim, a place קִרְיָתָיִם
proper name

TRANSLATION

In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer came together with the kings that were with him and they defeated the Rephaim [*the mighty ones*] in Ashteros Karnayim, the Zuzim [*the powerful ones*] in Ham, the Aimim [*the ones that incite fear*] at Shaveh Kiryasayim,

IN PLAIN TERMS

The fourteenth year, and the campaign begins, but not against the rebels. Kedorlaomer sweeps through a list of other peoples first, each named with the place he defeated them.

RASHI ON "In the fourteenth year"

Of their rebellion.

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PASUK 6 Bereishis 14:6 · 10 words

וְאֶת־הַחֹרִי בְּהַרְרָם שֵׂעִיר עַד אֵיל פָּארָן אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַמִּדְבָּר

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַחֹרִי
the הַ
חֹרִי
a Chorite or aboriginal Idumaean
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בְּהַרְרָם
in / with / by בְּ
mountain range הַרְרָ
their ם
ה־ר־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שֵׂעִיר
Seir, a hill country שֵׂעִיר
proper name

עַד
to, until, during עַד
preposition

אֵיל
Eil Paran, a place אֵיל
proper name

פָּארָן
Eil Paran, a place פָּארָן
proper name

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

עַל־
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

הַמִּדְבָּר
the הַ
open field, desert מִדְבָּר
ד־ב־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

And the Chorites in their hills of Seir, as far as Eil [*the Plain of*] Paran which borders [*is next to*] the wilderness.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The sweep continues south and west, as far as the edge of the wilderness. Four pesukim of conquest before the actual quarrel is reached.

RASHI ON **"In their hills"**

[Meaning] in their mountain.

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PASUK 7 Bereishis 14:7 · 18 words

וַיָּשֻׁבוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־עֵין מִשְׁפָּט הִוא קָדֵשׁ וַיַּכּוּ אֶת־כָּל־שְׂדֵה הָעֲמָלֵקִי וְגַם אֶת־הָאֱמֹרִי הַיֹּשֵׁב בְּחַצְצֹן תָּמָר

וַיָּשֻׁבוּ
and וַ
to turn back יָשֻׁבוּ
שׁ־ו־ב shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

וַיָּבֹאוּ
and וַ
to bring to, give יָבֹאוּ
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

עֵין
Ein Mishpat, a place עֵין
proper name

מִשְׁפָּט
Ein Mishpat, a place מִשְׁפָּט
proper name

הִוא
he, it, self, this, that הִוא
personal pronoun

קָדֵשׁ
Kadeish, a place קָדֵשׁ
proper name

וַיַּכּוּ
and וַ
to strike יַכּוּ
נ־כ־ה shoresh
Hifil · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שְׂדֵה
open space שְׂדֵה
ש־ד־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הָעֲמָלֵקִי
the הָ
עֲמָלֵקִי
an Amalekite or descendants of Amalek
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְגַם
and וְ
even, also, too גַּם
accusative particle

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

הָאֱמֹרִי
the הָ
an Emorite אֱמֹרִי
א־מ־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

הַיֹּשֵׁב
the הַ
to sit, dwell, remain יֹשֵׁב
י־ש־ב shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

בְּחַצְצֹן
in / with / by בְּ
Chatzatzon Tamar, a place חַצְצֹן
proper name

תָּמָר
Chatzatzon Tamar, a place תָּמָר
proper name

TRANSLATION

They turned back and came to Ein Mishpat [*the plain of compromise*] which is Kadeish [*Rekem*], and they struck all the territory of Amaleik, as well as the Emorites who lived in Chazazon Tamar [*Ein Gedi*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

They turn back and strike Amalek's territory and the Emorites. The campaign has been a wide arc, and only now does it close on the cities that rebelled.

RASHI ON **"Ein Mishpat which is Kadeish"**

It was so called on account [of the events] of the future. For Moshe and Aharon were destined to be judged there concerning the events of that fountain, which were the waters of Merivah. Onkelos, however, translates it plainly, [i.e.,] "The place where the citizens of the country would gather for all judgments."

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PASUK 8 Bereishis 14:8 · 19 words

וַיֵּצֵא מֶלֶךְ־סְדֹם וּמֶלֶךְ עֲמֹרָה וּמֶלֶךְ אַדְמָה וּמֶלֶךְ (צביים) [צְבוֹיִם] וּמֶלֶךְ בֶּלַע
הִוא־צֹעַר וַיַּעַרְכוּ אִתָּם מִלְחָמָה בְּעֵמֶק הַשִּׂדִּים

וַיֵּצֵא
and וַ
to go out, bring out יֵּצֵא
shoresh י־צ־א
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

מֶלֶךְ־
king מֶלֶךְ
shoresh מ־ל־כ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

וּמֶלֶךְ
and וּ
king מֶלֶךְ
shoresh מ־ל־כ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עֲמֹרָה
Amorah עֲמֹרָה
proper name

וּמֶלֶךְ
and וּ
king מֶלֶךְ
shoresh מ־ל־כ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַדְמָה
Admah, a city אַדְמָה
proper name

וּמֶלֶךְ
and וּ
king מֶלֶךְ
shoresh מ־ל־כ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

צביים
Tzevoyim, a city צביים
proper name

צְבוֹיִם
Tzevoyim, a city צְבוֹיִם
proper name

וּמֶלֶךְ
and וּ
king מֶלֶךְ
shoresh מ־ל־כ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בֶּלַע
Bela, a city בֶּלַע
proper name

אִתָּם
with, by, at, among אִתָּ
their ם
preposition

וַיַּעַרְכוּ
and וַ
to set in a row יַעַרְכוּ
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

צֹעַר
Zoar, a city צֹעַר
proper name

הִוא־
he, it, self, this, that הִוא
personal pronoun

הַשִּׂדִּים
the הַ
Siddim, a valley שִׂדִּים
proper name

בְּעֵמֶק
in / with / by בְּ
a valley עֵמֶק
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מִלְחָמָה
a battle מִלְחָמָה
ל־ח־מ shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

The king of Sedom set out, along with the king of Amorah, the king of Admah, the king of Tzevoyim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar, and engaged them in battle in the Valley of Siddim [*in the plain of the fields*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

The five kings come out to meet them. The Valley of Siddim, named in pasuk 3, is now the battlefield.

PASUK 9 Bereishis 14:9 · 17 words

אֵת כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר מֶלֶךְ עֵילָם וְתִדְעָל מֶלֶךְ גּוֹיִם וְאַמְרָפֶל מֶלֶךְ שִׁנְעָר וְאַרְיוֹךְ מֶלֶךְ אֶלָּסָר אַרְבָּעָה מְלָכִים אֶת־הַחֲמִשָּׁה

אֵת
with, by, at, among אֵת
preposition

כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר
Kedorlaomer, a king כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עֵילָם
Eilam, a kingdom עֵילָם
proper name

וְתִדְעָל
and וְ
Tidal, a king תִּדְעָל
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

גּוֹיִם
a nation גּוֹיִם
ג־ו־י shoresh
proper name

וְאַמְרָפֶל
and וְ
Amraphel, a king אַמְרָפֶל
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שִׁנְעָר
Shinar, a kingdom שִׁנְעָר
proper name

וְאַרְיוֹךְ
and וְ
Aryoch, a king אַרְיוֹךְ
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֶלָּסָר
Elasar, a kingdom אֶלָּסָר
proper name

אַרְבָּעָה
four אַרְבָּעָה
ר-ב-ע shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

מְלָכִים
king מְלָכִים
מ-ל-כ shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אֶת־
with, by, at, among אֶת
preposition

הַחֲמִשָּׁה
the הַ
five years חֲמִשָּׁה
ח-מ-ש shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

TRANSLATION

Against Kedorlaomer, king of Eilam, Sidal, king of Goyim [*king of peoples*], Amraphel, king of Shinar [*Babylon*], and Aryoch, king of Elasar; [there were] four kings against the five.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The pasuk counts it for us: four kings against five. The smaller force is the one that has just marched through everyone else.

RASHI ON "Four kings, etc"

Yet, the fewer ones were victorious. [This is] to inform you that they were powerful and, yet, Avraham did not refrain from giving chase to them.

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PASUK 10 Bereishis 14:10 · 14 words

וְעֵמֶק הַשִּׂדִּים בְּאֵרֹת בֻּאֵרֹת חֵמָר וַיָּנֻסוּ מֶלֶךְ־סְדֹם וַעֲמֹרָה וַיִּפְּלוּ־שָׁמָּה וְהַנִּשְׁאָרִים הֶרָה נָסוּ

וְעֵמֶק
and וְ
a valley עֵמֶק
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הַשִּׂדִּים
the הַ
Siddim, a valley שִׂדִּים
proper name

בְּאֵרֹת
a pit בְּאֵרֹת
noun · feminine · plural · construct state

בְּאֵרֹת
a pit בְּאֵרֹת
noun · feminine · plural · construct state

חֵמָר
bitumen חֵמָר
ח־מ־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וַיָּנֻסוּ
and וַ
to flit יָנֻסוּ
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

מֶלֶךְ־
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

וַעֲמֹרָה
and וַ
Amorah עֲמֹרָה
proper name

וַיִּפְּלוּ־
and וַ
to fall יִפְּלוּ
נ־פ־ל shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

שָׁמָּה
then, there שָׁמָּ
toward ה
adverb

וְהַנִּשְׁאָרִים
and וְ
the הַ
to swell up נִשְׁאָרִים
Nifal · participle · masculine plural

הֶרָה
mountain range הֶרָ
toward ה
ה־ר־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

נָסוּ
to flit נָסוּ
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

TRANSLATION

The Valley of Siddim [*The plain of the fields*] was [full of] mortar pits [*pits from which they raise up mortar*]; [and when] the Kings of Sedom and Amorah fled they fell there [into the pits], while the remainder fled to the mountains.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The terrain decides it. The valley was full of mortar pits; the kings of Sedom and Amorah fell into them in flight, and the rest escaped to the hills.

RASHI ON "mortar pits [Full of]"

There were many pits from which earth was taken for mortar. The Midrashic explanation is, that the mortar was mixed in them and it was through a miracle that the King of Sedom escaped from there. For among the nations there were some who did not believe that Avraham was saved from Ur Kasdim, from the fiery furnace. But, once he [the king of Sedom] escaped from the mortar, they believed [the event concerning] Avraham retroactively.

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PASUK 11 Bereishis 14:11 · 10 words

וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־כָּל־רְכֻשׁ סְדֹם וַעֲמֹרָה וְאֶת־כָּל־אָכְלָם וַיֵּלֵכוּ

וַיִּקְחוּ
and וַ
to take יִקְחוּ
ל־ק־ח shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

רְכֻשׁ
property רְכֻשׁ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

וַעֲמֹרָה
and וַ
Amorah עֲמֹרָה
proper name

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אָכְלָם
food אָכְל
their ם
א־כ־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וַיֵּלֵכוּ

and וַ
to walk, carry יֵּלֵכוּ
י־ל־כ shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

TRANSLATION

They took [*captured*] all the wealth of Sedom and Amorah and all their provisions and they went on their way.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The victors take everything from Sedom and Amorah and leave. As far as this pasuk is concerned the episode is over, it reads like the end of the account.

PASUK 12 Bereishis 14:12 · 12 words

וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת־לוֹט וְאֶת־רְכֻשׁוֹ בֶּן־אַחִי אַבְרָם וַיֵּלֵכוּ וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב בִּסְדֹם

וַיִּקְחוּ

and וַ
to take יִּקְחוּ
ל־ק־ח shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

אֶת־

to אֶת
direct object marker

לוֹט

Lot לוֹט
proper name

וְאֶת־

and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

רְכֻשׁוֹ

property רְכֻשׁ
his/her/its וֹ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בֶּן־

son, builder בֶּן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַחִי

brother, sibling אַחִי
אָח milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָם

Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

וַיֵּלֵכוּ

and וַ
to walk, carry יֵּלֵכוּ
י־ל־כ shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine plural

בְּסְדֹם
in / with / by בְּ
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

יֹשֵׁב
to sit, dwell, remain יָשַׁב
ב־ש־י shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

וְהוּא
and וְ
he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

TRANSLATION

They took [*captured*] Lot and his wealth. [Lot was] Avram's nephew. Then they went on their way. He had been living in Sedom.

IN PLAIN TERMS

And then one more item: they took Lot. The pasuk identifies him as Avram's nephew and explains, almost in an aside, that he had been living in Sedom. The war becomes Avram's business in a single clause.

RASHI ON **"He had been living in Sedom"**

[This is to teach:] what caused this to happen to him? [The fact] that he resided in Sedom.

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PASUK 13 Bereishis 14:13 · 18 words

וַיָּבֹא הַפָּלִיט וַיַּגֵּד לְאַבְרָם הָעִבְרִי וְהוּא שֹׁכֵן בְּאֵלֹנֵי מַמְרֵא הָאֱמֹרִי אֲחִי אֶשְׁכֹּל וַאֲחִי עָנֵר וְהֵם בַּעֲלֵי בְרִית־אַבְרָם

וַיָּבֹא
and וַ
to bring to, give יָבֹא
ב-ו-א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

הַפָּלִיט
the הַ
a refugee פָּלִיט
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וַיַּגֵּד
and וַ
to announce, expose יַגֵּד
נ-ג-ד shoresh
Hifil · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לְאַבְרָם
to / for לְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

הָעִבְרִי
the הָ
עִבְרִי
an Eberite or descendant of Eber
ע-ב-ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְהוּא
and וְ
he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

שֹׁכֵן
to reside or permanently stay שֹׁכֵן
ש-כ-נ shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

בְּאֵלֹנֵי
in / with / by בְּ
an oak or other strong tree אֵלֹנֵי
א-ו-ל shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

מַמְרֵא
Mamrei מַמְרֵא
proper name

הָאֱמֹרִי
the הָ
an Emorite אֱמֹרִי
א-מ-ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְהֵם
and וְ
they emphasize הֵם
personal pronoun

עָנֵר
Aneir עָנֵר
proper name

וַאֲחִי
and וַ
brother, sibling אֲחִי
אָח milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֶשְׁכֹּל
Eshkol אֶשְׁכֹּל
proper name

אֲחִי
brother, sibling אֲחִי
אָח milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

בְּרִית־
to make a pact בְּרִית
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

בַּעֲלֵי
a master בַּעֲלֵי
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

TRANSLATION

The one who had escaped came and told Avram the Ivri, who was living in the Plains of Mamrei the Emorite, the brother of Eshkol and Aneir. They were Avram's allies.

IN PLAIN TERMS

A survivor brings the news. Avram is called *ha-Ivri* here for the first time, and his allies are named, Mamrei, Eshkol and Aneir, the men whose plains he settled in at the end of the last perek.

RASHI ON "The one who had escaped came"

According to the plain meaning, this refers to Og who escaped from the war. This is what is referred to in Tanach "For only Og was left from the remnant of the Rephaim." This is the meaning of "was left," that Amrophel and his company did not kill him when they smote the Rephaim in Ashteros Karnayim. [This is based on Midrash] Tanchuma. [However,] the Midrash Ber. Rab. [explains:] This refers to Og who escaped from the Generation of the Flood. And that is [the meaning of:] מִיֶּתֶר הָרְפָאִים as is written, "The giants were upon the land, etc." It was his [Og's] intention that Avram be killed so that he might marry Sarah.

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PASUK 14 Bereishis 14:14 · 17 words

וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם כִּי נִשְׁבָּה אָחִיו וַיָּרֶק אֶת־חֲנִיכָיו יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ שְׁמֹנָה עָשָׂר וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת וַיִּרְדֹּף עַד־דָּן

וַיִּשְׁמַע
and וַ
to hear attentively יִשְׁמַע
ש־מ־ע shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

נִשְׁבָּה
to transport into captivity נִשְׁבָּה
Nifal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

אָחִיו
brother, sibling אָחִי
his/her/its ו
אָח milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וַיָּרֶק
and וַ
to pour out יָרֶק
Hifil · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

חֲנִיכָיו
initiated חֲנִיכָי
his/her/its ו
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

יְלִידֵי
born יְלִידֵי
י־ל־ד shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

בֵיתוֹ
house בֵית
his/her/its וֹ
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מֵאוֹת
a hundred מֵאוֹת
מ-א-ה shoresh
adjective · both · plural

וּשְׁלֹשׁ
and וּ
three שְׁלֹשׁ
שָׁלוֹשׁ milah
adjective · feminine · singular

עָשָׂר
ten, teens עָשָׂר
ע-ש-ר shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

שְׁמֹנֶה
a cardinal number, eight שְׁמֹנֶה
ש-מ-נ shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

דָּן
Dan, a place דָּן
proper name

עַד־
to, until, during עַד
preposition

וַיִּרְדֹּף
and וַ
יִּרְדֹּף
to run after usually with hostile intent
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

TRANSLATION

When Avram heard that his kinsman was taken captive, he armed his trained servants [*lads*] who were born in his household, three hundred and eighteen [men], and he pursued [them] until Dan.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He hears that his kinsman is captive and moves immediately. The number is exact, three hundred and eighteen men of his own household, and he pursues as far as Dan. Nothing is said about weighing the risk.

RASHI ON "He armed"

As the Targum translates: "And he armed." Similarly: וַהֲרִיקוֹתִי אַחֲרֵיכֶם חָרֶב [is translated by Onkelos:] "I will arm myself with a sword against you." Similarly: אָרִיק חַרְבִּי ["I will arm myself with sword"]. "Similarly:" Arm yourself with sword and ax."

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PASUK 15 Bereishis 14:15 · 12 words

וַיֵּחָלֵק עֲלֵיהֶם לַיְלָה הוּא וַעֲבָדָיו וַיַּכֵּם וַיִּרְדְּפֵם עַד־חוֹבָה אֲשֶׁר מִשְּׂמֹאל לְדַמָּשֶׂק

וַיֵּחָלֵק
and וַ
to be smooth יֵחָלֵק
Nifal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

עֲלֵיהֶם
above, over, upon עֲלֵי
their הֶם
preposition

לַיְלָה
night לַיְלָה
ל־ו־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

הוּא
he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

וַעֲבָדָיו
and וַ
servant עֲבָדָי
his/her/its ו
ע־ב־ד shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

וַיַּכֵּם
and וַ
to strike יַכֵּ
their ם
נ־כ־ה shoresh
Hifil · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

וַיִּרְדְּפֵם
and וַ
יִרְדְּפֵ
to run after usually with hostile intent
their ם
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

עַד־
to, until, during עַד
preposition

חוֹבָה
Chovah, a place חוֹבָה
proper name

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

מִשְּׂמֹאל
from מִ
dark שְׂמֹאל
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לְדַמָּשֶׂק
to / for לְ
Damascus דַּמָּשֶׂק
proper name

TRANSLATION

He divided [his men] against them at night, he and his servants and he attacked them. He pursued them until Chovah, which is to the left [*north*] of Damascus.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He splits his force and attacks at night, and pursues past Damascus. Four verbs in one pasuk, with no description of the fighting itself.

RASHI ON "He divided [his men] against them"

According to its plain meaning the verse should be inverted [as if to read:] "He divided himself, he and his servants, against them, at night," in the manner of pursuers who chase after those who are fleeing who run in different directions.

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PASUK 16 Bereishis 14:16 · 15 words

וַיָּשֶׁב אֵת כָּל־הָרְכֻשׁ וְגַם אֶת־לוֹט אָחִיו וּרְכֻשׁוֹ הֵשִׁיב וְגַם אֶת־הַנָּשִׁים וְאֶת־הָעָם

וַיָּשֶׁב
and וַ
to turn back יָשֶׁב
שׁ־ו־ב shoresh
Hifil · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֵת
to אֵת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הָרְכֻשׁ
the הָ
property רְכֻשׁ
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְגַם
and וְ
even, also, too גַּם
accusative particle

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

לוֹט
Lot לוֹט
proper name

אָחִיו
brother, sibling אָחִי
his/her/its ו
אָח milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וּרְכֻשׁוֹ

and וּ
property רְכֻשׁ
his/her/its וֹ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הֵשִׁיב

to turn back הֵשִׁיב
ש־ו־ב shoresh
Hifil · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

וְגַם

and וְ
even, also, too גַּם
accusative particle

אֶת־

to אֶת
direct object marker

הַנָּשִׁים

the הַ
woman נָשִׁים
א־ש־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · plural · absolute state

וְאֶת־

and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הָעָם

the הָ
people, tribe, troops עָם
ע־מ־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

He brought back all the property. His kinsman [*His brother's son*] Lot and his possessions he also brought back, as well as the women and the people.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The recovery is listed in the order that matters to the story: all the property, and Lot, and Lot's possessions, and the women and the people. Everything taken in pesukim 11 and 12 comes back.

PASUK 17 Bereishis 14:17 · 19 words

וַיֵּצֵא מֶלֶךְ־סְדֹם לִקְרָאתוֹ אַחֲרֵי שׁוּבוֹ מֵהַכּוֹת אֶת־כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר וְאֶת־הַמְּלָכִים אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ אֶל־עֵמֶק שָׁוֵה הוּא עֵמֶק הַמֶּלֶךְ

וַיֵּצֵא
and וַ
to go out, bring out יֵצֵא
shoresh י־צ־א
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

מֶלֶךְ־
king מֶלֶךְ
shoresh מ־ל־כ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

לִקְרָאתוֹ
to / for לְ
a meeting, an encounter קְרָאת
his/her/its וֹ
Qal · infinitive construct

אַחֲרֵי
after אַחֲרֵי
preposition

שׁוּבוֹ
to turn back שׁוּב
his/her/its וֹ
shoresh ש־ו־ב
Qal · infinitive construct

מֵהַכּוֹת
from מֵ
to strike הַכּוֹת
shoresh נ־כ־ה
Hifil · infinitive construct

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר
Kedorlaomer, a king כְּדָרְלָעֹמֶר
proper name

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַמְּלָכִים
the הַ
king מְלָכִים
shoresh מ־ל־כ
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

אִתּוֹ
with, by, at, among אִת
his/her/its וֹ
preposition

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

עֵמֶק
a valley עֵמֶק
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שָׁוֵה
Shaveh, a valley שָׁוֵה
proper name

הוּא
he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

עֵמֶק
a valley עֵמֶק
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הַמֶּלֶךְ
the הַ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

The King of Sedom went out to meet him after his return from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, to the Valley of Shaveh which is the King's Valley [*to the barren plain, which is the place of the racetrack of the king*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

The king of Sedom comes out to meet him. The man who fled into a pit is now coming to meet the man who recovered his city's wealth.

RASHI ON "Valley of Shaveh"

That is its name as the Targum explains לְמֵישַׁר מַפְּנָא [the barren plain], empty of trees and from all impediments.

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PASUK 18 Bereishis 14:18 · 11 words

וּמַלְכִּי־צֶדֶק מֶלֶךְ שָׁלֵם הוֹצִיא לֶחֶם וָיָיִן וְהוּא כֹהֵן לְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן

וּמַלְכִּי־
and וּ
Malki-Tzedek מַלְכִּי
proper name

צֶדֶק
Malki-Tzedek צֶדֶק
proper name

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
מ-ל-כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שָׁלֵם
Shaleim שָׁלֵם
proper name

הוֹצִיא
to go out, bring out הוֹצִיא
י-צ-א shoresh
Hifil · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

לֶחֶם
food לֶחֶם
ל-ח-מ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

וָיָיִן
and וָ
wine יָיִן
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְהוּא
and וְ
he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

כֹהֵן
priest, official כֹהֵן
כ-ה-נ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לְאֵל
to / for לְ
strength אֵל
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

עֶלְיוֹן
high, lofty עֶלְיוֹן
adjective · masculine · singular

TRANSLATION

Malki Zedek, king of Shaleim [*Yerushalayim*], brought out bread and wine. He was a Kohein of [*He was serving before*] the Most High Almighty.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Malki-Tzedek interrupts the meeting. He is king of Shaleim and a kohen to the Most High, and he brings out bread and wine. He arrives without introduction and leaves without explanation.

RASHI ON

”Malki Zedek“

The Midrash Aggadah [explains] that he is Sheim, the son of Noach.

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PASUK 19 Bereishis 14:19 · 9 words

וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וַיֹּאמַר בָּרוּךְ אַבְרָם לְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן קֹנֵה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ

וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ
and וַ
to bless יְבָרְכֵ
his/her/its הוּ
ב־ר־כ shoresh
Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

וַיֹּאמַר
and וַ
to say יֹּאמַר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

בָּרוּךְ
to bless בָּרוּךְ
ב־ר־כ shoresh
Qal · passive participle · masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

לְאֵל
to / for לְ
strength אֵל
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

עֶלְיוֹן
high, lofty עֶלְיוֹן
adjective · masculine · singular

קֹנֵה
to erect קֹנֵה
ק־נ־ה shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

שָׁמַיִם
sky, heavens שָׁמַיִם
שָׁמַיִם milah
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

וָאָרֶץ
and וָ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

He blessed him and said: Blessed be Avram to the Most High, Almighty Possessor of heaven and earth.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He blesses Avram first, and calls God Possessor of heaven and earth, the same claim to the land that the promises have been making.

RASHI ON **”Possesor of heaven and earth“**

[The meaning is] the same as “Maker of heaven and earth.” Through His having made them He acquired them to be His.

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PASUK 20 Bereishis 14:20 · 11 words

וּבָרוּךְ אֵל עֶלְיוֹן אֲשֶׁר־מִגֵּן צָרֶיךָ בְּיָדֶךָ וַיִּתֶּן־לוֹ מַעֲשֵׂר מִכֹּל

וּבָרוּךְ

and וּ

to bless בָּרוּךְ

shoresh ב־ר־כ

Qal · passive participle · masculine singular

אֵל

strength אֵל

noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

עֶלְיוֹן

high, lofty עֶלְיוֹן

adjective · masculine · singular

אֲשֶׁר־

אֲשֶׁר

who, which, what, that, when, where, how

relative particle

מִגֵּן

to shield מִגֵּן

Piel · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

צָרֶיךָ

narrow צָרֶי

your ךָ

noun · masculine · plural · construct state

מַעֲשֵׂר

a tenth מַעֲשֵׂר

ע-ש-ר shoresh

noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לוֹ

to / for לְ

his/her/its וֹ

וַיִּתֶּן־

and וַ

to give יִתֶּן

נ-ת-נ shoresh

Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

בְּיָדֶךָ

in / with / by בְּ

hand יָדֶ

your ךָ

יָד milah

noun · both · singular · construct state

מִכֹּל

from מִ

all, every כֹּל

כ-ל-ל shoresh

noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

And blessed be the Most High Almighty Who has delivered your enemies into your hand. [Avram] gave him a tenth of everything.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Then he blesses God for the victory, putting the win in its place. Avram answers by giving him a tenth of everything, without being asked.

RASHI ON "Who has delivered"

[Meaning] "who has delivered," as in "[How] can I deliver you, Israel?"

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PASUK 21 Bereishis 14:21 · 11 words

וַיֹּאמֶר מֶלֶךְ־סְדֹם אֶל־אַבְרָם תֶּן־לִי הַנֶּפֶשׁ וְהָרְכֻשׁ קַח־לָךְ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
אמר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

מֶלֶךְ־
king מֶלֶךְ
מלכ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

תֶּן־
to give תֶּן
נתנ shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

לִי
to / for לְ
my י

הַנֶּפֶשׁ
the הַ
living creature נֶפֶשׁ
נפש shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

וְהָרְכֻשׁ
and וְ
the הָ
property רְכֻשׁ
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

קַח־
to take קַח
לקח shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

לָךְ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

TRANSLATION

The King of Sedom said to Avram: Give me the people, and take the possessions for yourself.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The king of Sedom finally makes his offer: give me the people, keep the goods. It is a reasonable proposal, and it would leave Avram rich.

RASHI ON **”Give me the people“**

[Meaning:] of all my things that were captured that you rescued, return only the people to me.

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PASUK 22 Bereishis 14:22 · 14 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל־מֶלֶךְ סְדֹם הֲרִמֹתִי יָדִי אֶל־ה׳ אֵל עֶלְיוֹן קֹנֵה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
shoresh א־מ־ר
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

מֶלֶךְ
king מֶלֶךְ
shoresh מ־ל־כ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

סְדֹם
Sedom סְדֹם
proper name

הֲרִימֹתִי
הֲרִימֹתִי
to be high actively, to rise or raise
shoresh ר־ו־מ
Hifil · perfect · 1st common singular

יָדִי
hand יָד
my י
יָד milah
noun · both · singular · construct state

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

קֹנֵה

to erect קֹנֵה

ק־נ־ה shoresh

Qal · participle · masculine singular

עֶלְיוֹן

high, lofty עֶלְיוֹן

adjective · masculine · singular

אֵל

strength אֵל

noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וָאָרֶץ

and וָ

the earth אָרֶץ

א־ר־צ shoresh

noun · both · singular · absolute state

שָׁמַיִם

sky, heavens שָׁמַיִם

שָׁמַיִם milah

noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

TRANSLATION

Avram said to the King of Sedom: I have lifted my hand [*in prayer*] to [*before*] Hashem [*before*] the Most High Almighty, Possessor of heaven and earth.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Avram refuses before the sentence is finished, and grounds the refusal in an oath he has already sworn, using Malki-Tzedek's own phrase, Possessor of heaven and earth.

RASHI ON "I have lifted my hand"

This is an expression of an oath: "I lift my hand to God, Most High." Similarly: בִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי [means,] "I swear." Similarly: נָתַתִּי כֶסֶף הַשָּׂדֶה קַח מִמֶּנִּי, [means:] "I am giving you the price of the field, take it from me."

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PASUK 23 Bereishis 14:23 · 16 words

אִם־מִחוּט וְעַד שְׂרוֹךְ־נַעַל וְאִם־אֶקַּח מִכָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לָךְ וְלֹא תֹאמַר אֲנִי הֶעֱשַׁרְתִּי אֶת־אַבְרָם

אִם־
whether, if, oh that אִם
conjunction

מִחוּט
from מִ
a string חוּט
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְעַד
and וְ
to, until, during עַד
preposition

שְׂרוֹךְ־
a thong שְׂרוֹךְ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

נַעַל
a sandal tongue נַעַל
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

וְאִם־
and וְ
whether, if, oh that אִם
conjunction

אֶקַּח
to take אֶקַּח
ל־ק־ח shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular

מִכָּל־
from מִ
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֲשֶׁר־
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

לָךְ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

וְלֹא
and וְ
not, no לֹא
negative particle

תֹאמַר
to say תֹאמַר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 2nd masculine singular

אֲנִי
I am אֲנִי
personal pronoun

הֶעֱשַׁרְתִּי
to accumulate הֶעֱשַׁרְתִּי
Hifil · perfect · 1st common singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

TRANSLATION

Neither a thread nor a shoelace! And I will not take anything of yours, so you will not [be able] to say, I have made Avram wealthy.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Not a thread, not a shoelace. The reason is precise and about reputation: so that you cannot say, *I made Avram rich.* He was made wealthy in Egypt and will not be made wealthy here.

RASHI ON **"Neither a thread nor a shoelace"**

Will I retain for myself from the spoils.

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PASUK 24 Bereishis 14:24 · 16 words

בִּלְעָדַי רַק אֲשֶׁר אָכְלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וְחֵלֶק הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר הָלְכוּ אִתִּי עָנֵר אֶשְׁכֹּל וּמַמְרֵא הֵם יִקְחוּ חֶלְקָם {ס}

בִּלְעָדַי
except, without בִּלְעָדַי
my י
preposition

רַק
merely, only רַק
accusative particle

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

אָכְלוּ
to eat אָכְלוּ
א־כ־ל shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

הַנְּעָרִים
the הַ
a boy, a young man נְעָרִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

וְחֵלֶק
and וְ
smoothness חֵלֶק
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הָאֲנָשִׁים
the הָ
man, male person אֲנָשִׁים
א־י־ש shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

הָלְכוּ
to walk הָלְכוּ
ה־ל־כ shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

אִתִּי
with, by, at, among אִתִּ
my י
preposition

עָנֵר
Aneir עָנֵר
proper name

אֶשְׁכֹּל
Eshkol אֶשְׁכֹּל
proper name

וּמַמְרֵא
and וּ
Mamrei מַמְרֵא
proper name

הֵם
they emphasize הֵם
personal pronoun

יִקְחוּ
to take יִקְחוּ
ל־ק־ח shoresh
Qal · jussive · 3rd masculine plural

חֶלְקָם
smoothness חֶלְקָ
their ם
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

I am excluding myself; only what the lads have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me, Aneir, Eshkol and Mamrei, they may take their portion.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He excludes himself only, not his men: what the young men ate, and the share of Aneir, Eshkol and Mamrei. His allies are not bound by his refusal, and he does not impose it on them.

RASHI ON "The lads"

[Meaning:] my servants who went with me. In addition, "Aneir, Eshkol, and Mamrei, etc. Though it was my servants who took part in the war," as it is said, "He and his servants smote them," and, Aneir and his friends [only] stayed with the supplies to guard it, nevertheless, they will get their share. From him [Avram], Dovid learned a lesson when he said, "As the share of the participant in battle and as the share of the one that remains with the supplies, they will share together." It is therefore said, "This was so from that day [and had been so] from earlier times and he [Dovid] made it an ordinance and a law." It does not state and on, because the law had already been given in the days of Avram.

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CHAPTER 13

Bereishis Perek 15

The covenant between the pieces

✦ ✦ ✦

PASUK 1 Bereishis 15:1 · 19 words

אַחַר הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הָיָה דְבַר־ה׳ אֶל־אַבְרָם בַּמַּחֲזֶה לֵאמֹר אַל־תִּירָא אַבְרָם
אָנֹכִי מָגֵן לָךְ שְׂכָרְךָ הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד

אַחַר
after אַחַר
preposition

הַדְּבָרִים
the הַ
word, matter, thing דְּבָרִים
ד־ב־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

הָאֵלֶּה
the הָ
these or those אֵלֶּה
demonstrative pronoun

הָיָה
to be הָיָה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

דְבַר־
word, matter, thing דְּבַר
ד־ב־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

בַּמַּחֲזֶה
in / with / by בַּ
a vision מַחֲזֶה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לֵאמֹר
to / for לְ
to say אמר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

אַל־
not, nothing אַל
negative particle

תִּירָא
to fear, reverence תִּירָא
י־ר־א shoresh
Qal · jussive · 2nd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

אָנֹכִי
I am אָנֹכִי
personal pronoun

מָגֵן
a shield מָגֵן
noun · both · singular · absolute state

לָךְ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

שְׂכָרְךָ
payment of contract שְׂכָר
your ךָ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הַרְבֵּה
to increase הַרְבֵּה
ר־ב־ה shoresh
Hifil · infinitive absolute

מְאֹד
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

TRANSLATION

After these events, the word of Hashem came to Avram in a vision, saying: Fear not Avram, I am your shield [*My Word is your strength*], your reward is very great.

IN PLAIN TERMS

A new scene, marked as a vision. The opening words answer something Avram has not said aloud: *fear not*. He has just refused a fortune and made enemies of four kings, and the reassurance comes before any request of his.

RASHI ON "After these events"

Wherever אַחַר is used it signifies immediately [after]. [When] אַחֲרֵי [is used] [it means] long afterwards. [Thus, immediately] "after these events," [i.e.,] after this miracle occurred to him that he killed the kings, he became anxious and said, "Maybe I have already received my reward for all my righteousness." Therefore, God said to him… Fear not Avram, I am your shield. From punishment. [I.e.,] that you will not be punished for all the people that you killed. And as for you anxiety that you have already received you reward, "Your reward is very great."

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PASUK 2 Bereishis 15:2 · 16 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֲדֹנָי ה׳ מַה־תִּתֶּן־לִי וְאָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ עֲרִירִי וּבֶן־מֶשֶׁק בֵּיתִי הוּא דַּמֶּשֶׂק אֱלִיעֶזֶר

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹּאמֶר
shoresh א־מ־ר
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

אֲדֹנָי
the Lord אֲדֹנָ
my י
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

מַה־
what, how, why, whatever מַה
interrogative

תִּתֶּן־
to give תִּתֶּן
shoresh נ־ת־נ
Qal · imperfect · 2nd masculine singular

לִי
to / for לְ
my י

וְאָנֹכִי
and וְ
I am אָנֹכִי
personal pronoun

הוֹלֵךְ
to walk הוֹלֵךְ
shoresh ה־ל־כ
Qal · participle · masculine singular

עֲרִירִי
bare עֲרִירִי
adjective · masculine · singular

וּבֶן־
and וּ
son, builder בֶּן
shoresh ב־נ־ה
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מֶשֶׁק

possession מֶשֶׁק

noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בֵּיתִי

house בֵּית

my י

ב־נ־ה shoresh

noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הוּא

he, it, self, this, that הוּא

personal pronoun

דַּמֶּשֶׂק

Damascus דַּמֶּשֶׂק

proper name

אֱלִיעֶזֶר

Eliezer אֱלִיעֶזֶר

proper name

TRANSLATION

Avram said: My Master, God, what will You give me since I continue to be childless, and the manager of my household [*this supplier who is in my house*] is Eliezer of Damascus.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Avram answers a promise of reward by asking what any of it is worth: he has no child, and his steward stands to inherit. It is the first time he questions anything he has been told.

RASHI ON "Continue to be childless"

Menachem ben Saruk explains it [עֲרִירִי] as meaning "heir," comparable to עֵר וְעוֹנָה. עֲרִירִי [would then mean] without an heir as you would say "It will תְּשָׁרֵשׁ all my crops," meaning, "it will tear up its roots." Similarly עֲרִירִי means childless, in Old French desanfantez. [However,] it seems to me that עֵר וְעוֹנָה is of the same derivation as וְלִבִּי עֵר, [meaning, "my heart is awake"], whereas וַעֲרִירִי means "destruction" as in "Destroy it, destroy it," and as in "Destroying the foundation," and as in "Shall be completely destroyed," and as in "For the cedar will be destroyed."

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PASUK 3 Bereishis 15:3 · 12 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם הֵן לִי לֹא נָתַתָּה זָרַע וְהִנֵּה בֶן־בֵּיתִי יוֹרֵשׁ אֹתִי

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

הֵן
lo! if הֵן
demonstrative

לִי
to / for לְ
my י

לֹא
not, no לֹא
negative particle

נָתַתָּה
to give נָתַתָּה
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · perfect · 2nd masculine singular

זָרַע
seed, plant, offspring זָרַע
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְהִנֵּה
and וְ
look! הִנֵּה
demonstrative

בֶן־
son, builder בֶּן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בֵּיתִי
house בַּיִת
my י
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

יוֹרֵשׁ
to take possession of יוֹרֵשׁ
י־ר־ש shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

אֹתִי
to אֹת
my י
direct object marker

TRANSLATION

And Avram said: Behold, You have not given me children, and thus one of my household will be my heir.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He says it again, plainly, in case the point was missed, You have given me no offspring, so a member of my household inherits. The repetition is the weight of the complaint.

RASHI ON **”Behold, You have not given me children“**

And what benefit [is there] from all that you shall give to me?

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PASUK 4 Bereishis 15:4 · 15 words

וְהִנֵּה דְבַר־ה׳ אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר לֹא יִירָשְׁךָ זֶה כִּי־אִם אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמֵּעֶיךָ הוּא יִירָשֶׁךָ

וְהִנֵּה
and וְ
look הִנֵּה!
demonstrative

דְבַר־
word, matter, thing דְּבַר
ד־ב־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֵלָיו
near, toward, among אֵלֶי
his/her/its ו
preposition

לֵאמֹר
to / for לְ
to say אמר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

לֹא
not, no לֹא
negative particle

יִירָשְׁךָ
to take possession of יִרָשׁ
your ךָ
י־ר־ש shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

זֶה
this or that זֶה
demonstrative pronoun

כִּי־
because, since כִּי
conjunction

אִם
whether, if, oh that אִם
conjunction

מִמֵּעֶיךָ

from מִ

the innards, the body מֵעֶי

your ךָ

noun · masculine · plural · construct state

יֵצֵא

to go out, bring out יֵצֵא

י–צ–א shoresh

Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

אֲשֶׁר

אֲשֶׁר

who, which, what, that, when, where, how

relative particle

יִירָשֶׁךָ

to take possession of יִירָשֶׁ

your ךָ

י–ר–ש shoresh

Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

הוּא

he, it, self, this, that הוּא

personal pronoun

TRANSLATION

Suddenly the word of Hashem came to him, saying: That one will not be your heir; only he that will come from within your body [*a son that you will beget*] will be your heir.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The answer is immediate and specific. Not that one; one who comes from your own body. The vagueness of *descendants* in the earlier promises is narrowed to a son.

PASUK 5 Bereishis 15:5 · 18 words

וַיּוֹצֵא אֹתוֹ הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הַבֶּט־נָא הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וּסְפֹר הַכּוֹכָבִים אִם־תּוּכַל לִסְפֹּר אֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ כֹּה יִהְיֶה זַרְעֶךָ

וַיּוֹצֵא
and וַ
to go out, bring out יּוֹצֵא
יּ־צ־א shoresh
Hifil · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֹתוֹ
to אֹת
his/her/its וֹ
direct object marker

הַחוּצָה
the הַ
outside, outdoors חוּצָ
toward ה
ח־ו־צ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹּאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

הַבֶּט־
to scan הַבֶּט
Hifil · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

נָא
now please נָא
exhortation

הַשָּׁמַיְמָה
the הַ
sky, heavens שָׁמַיְמָ
toward ה
שָׁמַיִם milah
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

וּסְפֹר
and וּ
to count, to reckon סְפֹר
ס־פ־ר shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

הַכּוֹכָבִים
the הַ
a star כּוֹכָבִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אִם־
whether, if, oh that אִם
conjunction

תּוּכַל
to be able תּוּכַל
י־כ־ל shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 2nd masculine singular

לִסְפֹּר
to / for לְ
to count, to reckon סְפֹר
ס־פ־ר shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

יִהְיֶה
to be יִהְיֶה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

כֹּה
thus, here, now כֹּה
adverb

לוֹ
to / for ל
his/her/its וֹ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֹתָם
to אֹתָ
their ם
direct object marker

זַרְעֶךָ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעָ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

He [then] took him outside and said: Look towards the heavens and count the stars if you are able to count them. He then said to him: So [numerous] will your descendants be.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He is taken outside and told to count the stars. In 13:16 the comparison was dust, underfoot; here it is stars, overhead, and again the pasuk sets the terms, if you can count them.

RASHI ON "He [then] took him outside"

According to the plain meaning: He took him from his tent, outside, to see the stars. However, according to its Midrash, He said to him, "Leave your astrological calculations that you have seen in the constellations that you are not destined to have a son. It is Avram who will have no son, but Avraham will have a son. Similarly, it is Sarai who will not give birth, but Sarah will give birth. By My calling you by a [different] name [your] destiny will change. An alternate explanation: He took him out of the terrestrial void and lifted him above the stars. This explains the use of the term הַבֵּט [which signifies looking] from above to below.

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PASUK 6 Bereishis 15:6 · 5 words

וְהֶאֱמִן בַּה׳ וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ לוֹ צְדָקָה

וְהֶאֱמִן
and וְ
to build up or support הֶאֱמִן
Hifil · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

בַּה׳
in / with / by בַּ
Hashem ה׳
proper name

וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ
and וַ
to plait or interpenetrate יַחְשֹׁב
his/her/its הָ
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לוֹ
to / for לְ
his/her/its וֹ

צְדָקָה
righteousness צְדָקָה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

He believed in [*the Word of*] Hashem, and this He accounted to him for righteousness.

IN PLAIN TERMS

One of the shortest pesukim in the parsha and among the most quoted: he believed, and it was accounted to him as righteousness. Nothing happens in it. It records only a state of mind.

RASHI ON "He believed in Hashem"

[Meaning:] he did not ask of Him a sign concerning this. Whereas, concerning the inheritance of the land he asked Him for a sign and said to Him, "With what [sign] will I know?"

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PASUK 7 Bereishis 15:7 · 14 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי ה׳ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים לָתֶת לְךָ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לְרִשְׁתָּהּ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹּאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֵלָיו
near, toward, among אֵלֶי
his/her/its ו
preposition

אֲנִי
I am אֲנִי
personal pronoun

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

הוֹצֵאתִיךָ
to go out, bring out הוֹצֵאתִי
your ךָ
י־צ־א shoresh
Hifil · perfect · 1st common singular

מֵאוּר
from מֵ
Ur אוּר
proper name

כַּשְׂדִּים
Kasdim, the Chaldeans כַּשְׂדִּים
proper name

לָתֶת
to / for לָ
to give תֶת
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

לְךָ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

הָאָרֶץ
the הָ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

הַזֹּאת
the הַ
this one זֹאת
demonstrative pronoun

לְרִשְׁתָּהּ
to / for לְ
to take possession of רִשְׁתָּ
his/her/its ה
י־ר־ש shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

TRANSLATION

He said to him: I am Hashem who brought you out of Ur Kasdim, to give to you this land as an inheritance.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The subject changes from offspring to land, and God identifies Himself by what He has already done, who brought you out of Ur Kasdim, before stating what He will do.

PASUK 8 Bereishis 15:8 · 7 words

וַיֹּאמַר אֲדֹנָי ה׳ בַּמָּה אֵדַע כִּי אִירָשֶׁנָּה

וַיֹּאמַר
and וַ
to say יֹּאמַר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֲדֹנָי
the Lord אֲדֹנָ
my י
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

בַּמָּה
in / with / by בַּ
what, how, why, whatever מָה
interrogative

אֵדַע
to know אֵדַע
י־ד־ע shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

אִירָשֶׁנָּה
to take possession of אִירָשֶׁ
his/her/its נָּה
י־ר־ש shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 1st common singular

TRANSLATION

And he said: My Master, God, how will I know that I will inherit it?

IN PLAIN TERMS

Avram asks again: how shall I know? He has just been described as believing; here he asks for something to go on. The text lets both stand without reconciling them.

PASUK 9 Bereishis 15:9 · 12 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו קְחָה לִי עֶגְלָה מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת וְעֵז מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת וְאַיִל מְשֻׁלָּשׁ וְתֹר וְגוֹזָל

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹּאמֶר
א-מ-ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֵלָיו
near, toward, among אֵלֵי
his/her/its ו
preposition

קְחָה
to take קְחָ
ה
ל-ק-ח shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

לִי
to / for לְ
my י

עֶגְלָה
a calf עֶגְלָה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
to be triplicate מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
Pual · passive participle · feminine singular

וְעֵז
and וְ
goat עֵז
ע-ז-ז shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
to be triplicate מְשֻׁלֶּשֶׁת
Pual · passive participle · feminine singular

וְאַיִל
and וְ
ram אַיִל
א-ו-ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

מְשֻׁלָּשׁ
to be triplicate מְשֻׁלָּשׁ
Pual · passive participle · masculine singular

וְתֹר
and וְ
a dove תֹּר
noun · both · singular · absolute state

וְגוֹזָל
and וְ
a nestling גוֹזָל
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

He said to him: Bring Me [*Sacrifice before Me*] three heifers, three goats and three rams, a dove, and a young pigeon.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The answer is not an argument but an instruction: three animals, each three years old, and two birds. No explanation is given for the list.

RASHI ON **"Three heifers"**

Three heifers are a symbol for the three bulls: 1) the bull offered on Yom Kippur; 2) the bull [offered] when the law is "hidden" from the people; and 3) the heifer whose neck was broken.

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PASUK 10 Bereishis 15:10 · 17 words

וַיִּקַּח־לוֹ אֶת־כָּל־אֵלֶּה וַיְבַתֵּר אֹתָם בַּתָּוֶךְ וַיִּתֵּן אִישׁ־בִּתְרוֹ לִקְרַאת רֵעֵהוּ וְאֶת־הַצִּפֹּר לֹא בָתָר

וַיִּקַּח־
and וַ
to take יִקַּח
לְ־ק־ח shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לוֹ
to / for לְ
his/her/its וֹ

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֵלֶּה
these or those אֵלֶּה
demonstrative pronoun

וַיְבַתֵּר
and וַ
to chop up יְבַתֵּר
Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֹתָם
to אֹתָ
their ם
direct object marker

בַּתָּוֶךְ
in / with / by בַּ
center תָּוֶךְ
ת־ו־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וַיִּתֵּן

and וַ
to give יִתֵּן
נ-ת-נ shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אִישׁ־

man, male person אִישׁ
א-י-ש shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בִּתְרוֹ

a section בֶּתֶר
his/her/its וֹ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

לִקְרַאת

to / for לְ
a meeting, an encounter קְרַאת
Qal · infinitive construct

רֵעֵהוּ

friend רֵעַ
his/her/its הוּ
ר-ע-ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וְאֶת־

and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַצִּפֹּר

the הַ
a little bird צִפֹּר
noun · both · singular · absolute state

לֹא

not, no לֹא
negative particle

בָתָר

to chop up בָתָר
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

TRANSLATION

He brought [*sacrificed*] all these to [*before*] Him; he split them in the middle [*into two equal parts*], and placed each piece opposite the other. The bird, however, he did not split.

IN PLAIN TERMS

He divides each animal and sets the halves facing each other, and does not divide the birds. The pasuk records the exception without saying why.

RASHI ON "He split them"

[Meaning:] he divided each into two parts. The verse does not exclude its literal meaning, since He was establishing a covenant with him that He would keep His promise to give possession of the land to his descendants, as is written: "On that day, Hashem made a covenant with Avram, saying," etc. And it is customary for the parties to a covenant to divide an animal and to pass through between its parts, as it is said: "Who passed through between the parts of the calf," here, too, the smoking furnace and the flaming torch which passed through between the pieces was the representative of the Divine Presence which is referred to as "fire."

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PASUK 11 Bereishis 15:11 · 7 words

וַיֵּרֶד הָעַיִט עַל־הַפְּגָרִים וַיַּשֵּׁב אֹתָם אַבְרָם

וַיֵּרֶד
and וַ
to go down יֵרֶד
י־ר־ד shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

הָעַיִט
the הָ
a hawk or other bird of prey עַיִט
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

עַל־
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

הַפְּגָרִים
the הַ
פְּגָרִים
a carcase, whether of man or beast
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

וַיַּשֵּׁב
and וַ
to blow יַשֵּׁב
Hifil · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֹתָם
to אֹתָ
their ם
direct object marker

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

TRANSLATION

Birds of prey [vultures] descended upon the carcasses, but Avram drove them away.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Birds of prey come down on the carcasses and Avram drives them off. A single concrete detail in the middle of a vision, and he is the one who acts.

RASHI ON "Birds of prey"

It is the name of a bird so called because it swoops and is greedy for the carcasses to fly quickly upon its food as in, "And you swooped upon the spoils."

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PASUK 12 Bereishis 15:12 · 13 words

וַיְהִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לָבוֹא וְתַרְדֵּמָה נָפְלָה עַל־אַבְרָם וְהִנֵּה אֵימָה חֲשֵׁכָה גְדֹלָה נֹפֶלֶת עָלָיו

וַיְהִי
and וַ
to be יְהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ
the הַ
the sun שֶׁמֶשׁ
noun · both · singular · absolute state

לָבוֹא
to / for לָ
to bring to, give בוֹא
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

וְתַרְדֵּמָה
and וְ
a lethargy or trance תַּרְדֵּמָה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

נָפְלָה
to fall נָפְלָה
נ־פ־ל shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd feminine singular

עַל־
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

וְהִנֵּה
and וְ
look! הִנֵּה
demonstrative

אֵימָה
fright אֵימָה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

חֲשֵׁכָה
darkness חֲשֵׁכָה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

גְדֹלָה
great, large גְדֹלָה
ג־ד־ל shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

נֹפֶלֶת
to fall נֹפֶלֶת
נ־פ־ל shoresh
Qal · participle · feminine singular

עָלָיו
above, over, upon עָלָי
his/her/its ו
preposition

TRANSLATION

As the sun was setting, a deep sleep fell upon Avram; and behold, a dread of deep darkness fell upon him.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Sunset, a deep sleep, and a dread of great darkness. The vocabulary shifts from what he does to what falls on him.

RASHI ON **”And behold, a dread of deep darkness“**

Symbolizing the oppression and darkness of the exiles.

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PASUK 13 Bereishis 15:13 · 17 words

וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַבְרָם יָדֹעַ תֵּדַע כִּי־גֵר יִהְיֶה זַרְעֲךָ בְּאֶרֶץ לֹא לָהֶם וַעֲבָדוּם וְעִנּוּ אֹתָם אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לְאַבְרָם
to / for לְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

יָדֹעַ
to know יָדֹעַ
י־ד־ע shoresh
Qal · infinitive absolute

תֵּדַע
to know תֵּדַע
י־ד־ע shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 2nd masculine singular

כִּי־
because, since כִּי
conjunction

גֵר
foreigner, guest גֵר
ג־ו־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

יִהְיֶה
to be יִהְיֶה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

זַרְעֲךָ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעַ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בְּאֶרֶץ
in / with / by בְּ
the earth אֶרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

לֹא
not, no לֹא
negative particle

לָהֶם
to / for לָ
their הֶם

וַעֲבָדוּם
and וַ
to work, serve עֲבָדוּ
their ם
ע-ב-ד shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd common plural

וְעִנּוּ
and וְ
to depress עִנּוּ
Piel · perfect · 3rd common plural

אֹתָם
to אֹתָ
their ם
direct object marker

אַרְבַּע
four אַרְבַּע
ר-ב-ע shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

מֵאוֹת
a hundred מֵאוֹת
מ-א-ה shoresh
adjective · both · plural

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש-נ-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

And He [Hashem] said to Avram: Know for sure that your descendants will be foreigners in a land that is not theirs. They will enslave them and oppress them [for] four hundred years.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The covenant opens with exile, not with land: your descendants will be strangers in a land not theirs, enslaved and oppressed, four hundred years. He asked how he would know he would inherit, and is told first what it will cost.

RASHI ON "That your descendants will be foreigners"

[The time] from Yitzchok's birth until Israel left Egypt was four hundred years. How is this so? Yitzchok was 60 years old at Yaakov's birth and when Yaakov descended to Egypt, he said, "The years of my temporary residence are one hundred and thirty years," making a total of 190. They were in Egypt 210 [years], the numerical value of רדו, making a total of 400 years. If you might suggest that they were in Egypt 400 [years], [this could not be so] because Kehos was of those who descended to Egypt. If you calculate the [total] years of Kehos, Amram and the eighty years of Moshe when [the Israelites] left Egypt, you will find only [a total of] 350. And you must still subtract from that all the years that Kehos lived after Amram's birth and that Amram lived after Moshe's birth.

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PASUK 14 Bereishis 15:14 · 12 words

וְגַם אֶת־הַגּוֹי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲבֹדוּ דָּן אָנֹכִי וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן יֵצְאוּ בִּרְכֻשׁ גָּדוֹל

וְגַם
and וְ
even, also, too גַּם
accusative particle

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַגּוֹי
the הַ
foreign nation גּוֹי
ג־ו־י shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

יַעֲבֹדוּ
to work, serve יַעֲבֹדוּ
ע־ב־ד shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine plural

דָּן
a straight course דָּן
Qal · participle · masculine singular

אָנֹכִי
I am אָנֹכִי
personal pronoun

וְאַחֲרֵי־
and וְ
after אַחֲרֵי
preposition

כֵן
rightly so כֵּן
adverb

יֵצְאוּ
to go out, bring out יֵצְאוּ
י־צ־א shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine plural

בִּרְכֻשׁ
in / with / by בְּ
property רְכֻשׁ
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

גָּדוֹל
great, large גָּדוֹל
ג־ד־ל shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

TRANSLATION

But also that nation whom they will serve I will judge; afterwards they will leave with great wealth.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Then the turn, the nation they serve will be judged, and they will come out with great wealth. The shape of the Egypt story is given here, generations before it happens.

RASHI ON

”But also that nation“

[The word] וְגַם [but also] includes the Four Kingdoms that will also perish because they enslaved Israel.

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PASUK 15 Bereishis 15:15 · 8 words

וְאַתָּה תָּבוֹא אֶל־אֲבֹתֶיךָ בְּשָׁלוֹם תִּקָּבֵר בְּשֵׂיבָה טוֹבָה

וְאַתָּה
and וְ
you אַתָּה
personal pronoun

תָּבוֹא
to bring to, give תָּבוֹא
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 2nd masculine singular

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אֲבֹתֶיךָ
father, parent אֲבֹתֶי
your ךָ
אָב milah
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

בְּשָׁלוֹם
in / with / by בְּ
safe שָׁלוֹם
ש־ל־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

תִּקָּבֵר
to inter תִּקָּבֵר
ק־ב־ר shoresh
Nifal · imperfect · 2nd masculine singular

בְּשֵׂיבָה
in / with / by בְּ
old age שֵׂיבָה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

טוֹבָה
good, well טוֹבָה
ט־ו־ב shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

TRANSLATION

You will join your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age.

IN PLAIN TERMS

A word for Avram himself, set between the two halves: he will not see any of it. He will go to his fathers in peace and be buried in good old age.

RASHI ON **"You will join"**

And will, therefore, not witness all this.

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PASUK 16 Bereishis 15:16 · 11 words

וְדוֹר רְבִיעִי יָשׁוּבוּ הֵנָּה כִּי לֹא־שָׁלֵם עֲוֹן הָאֱמֹרִי עַד־הֵנָּה

וְדוֹר
and וְ
generation, age דוֹר
ד־ו־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

רְבִיעִי
fourth רְבִיעִי
ר־ב־ע shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

יָשׁוּבוּ
to turn back יָשׁוּבוּ
ש־ו־ב shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine plural

הֵנָּה
to this side or that side הֵנָּה
adverb

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

לֹא־
not, no לֹא
negative particle

שָׁלֵם
complete שָׁלֵם
ש־ל־מ shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

עֲוֹן
perversity עֲוֹן
noun · both · singular · construct state

הָאֱמֹרִי
the הָ
an Emorite אֱמֹרִי
א־מ־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

עַד־
to, until, during עַד
preposition

הֵנָּה
to this side or that side הֵנָּה
adverb

TRANSLATION

The fourth generation will return here, for the sin of the Emorites will not be complete until then [*now*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

The fourth generation returns, and the delay is explained by something outside Israel entirely, the sin of the Emorite is not yet complete. The timing is not arbitrary.

RASHI ON **"The fourth generation"**

[I.e.,] after they will have been exiled to Egypt they will remain there for three generations, and the fourth will return to this land. Because it was in the Land of Canaan that He spoke with him and established this covenant as is written: "To give you this land as an inheritance." And so it was: Yaakov descended to Egypt. Now, go and count his generations. 1) Yehudah, 2) Peretz, 3) Chetzron and 4) Calev son of Chetzron [who was] of those who entered the Land.

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PASUK 17 Bereishis 15:17 · 15 words

וַיְהִי הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בָּאָה וַעֲלָטָה הָיָה וְהִנֵּה תַנּוּר עָשָׁן וְלַפִּיד אֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָבַר בֵּין הַגְּזָרִים הָאֵלֶּה

וַיְהִי
and וַ
to be יְהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ
the הַ
the sun שֶׁמֶשׁ
noun · both · singular · absolute state

בָּאָה
to bring to, give בָּאָה
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd feminine singular

וַעֲלָטָה
and וַ
dusk עֲלָטָה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

הָיָה
to be הָיָה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

וְהִנֵּה
and וְ
look! הִנֵּה
demonstrative

תַנּוּר
a fire-pot תַנּוּר
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עָשָׁן
smoke עָשָׁן
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְלַפִּיד
and וְ
a flambeau, lamp or flame לַפִּיד
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֵשׁ
fire אֵשׁ
אֵשׁ milah
noun · both · singular · absolute state

בֵּין

between, either...or בֵּין

preposition

עָבַר

to cross over עָבַר

ע־ב־ר shoresh

Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

אֲשֶׁר

אֲשֶׁר

who, which, what, that, when, where, how

relative particle

הָאֵלֶּה

the הָ

these or those אֵלֶּה

demonstrative pronoun

הַגְּזָרִים

the הַ

something cut off גְּזָרִים

noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

TRANSLATION

The sun set and it became very dark; and behold, a smoking furnace and a flaming torch had passed between these pieces.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Now it is fully dark, and a smoking furnace and a flaming torch pass between the pieces. Avram does not pass between them. Only the fire does.

RASHI ON "The sun set"

This is similar to וַיְהִי הֵם מְרִיקִים שַׁקֵּיהֶם. וַיְהִי הֵם קוֹבְרִים אִישׁ, meaning: and this thing happened.

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PASUK 18 Bereishis 15:18 · 20 words

בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כָּרַת ה׳ אֶת־אַבְרָם בְּרִית לֵאמֹר לְזַרְעֲךָ נָתַתִּי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת מִנְּהַר מִצְרַיִם עַד־הַנָּהָר הַגָּדֹל נְהַר־פְּרָת

בַּיּוֹם
in / with / by בַּ
day יוֹם
י־ו־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

הַהוּא
the הַ
he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

כָּרַת
to make a covenant כָּרַת
כ־ר־ת shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֶת־
with, by, at, among אֶת
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

בְּרִית
to make a pact בְּרִית
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

לֵאמֹר
to / for לְ
to say אמר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

לְזַרְעֲךָ
to / for לְ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעַ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

נָתַתִּי
to give נָתַתִּי
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · perfect · 1st common singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

הָאָרֶץ
the הָ
the earth אָרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

הַזֹּאת
the הַ
this one זֹאת
demonstrative pronoun

מִנְּהַר
from מִ
a stream including the sea נְהַר
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מִצְרַיִם
Mitzrayim, Egypt מִצְרַיִם
proper name

עַד־
to, until, during עַד
preposition

הַנָּהָר
the הַ
a stream including the sea נָהָר
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

הַגָּדֹל
the הַ
great, large גָּדֹל
ג־ד־ל shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

נְהַר־
a stream including the sea נְהַר
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

פְּרָת
the Euphrates פְּרָת
proper name

TRANSLATION

On that day Hashem made a covenant with Avram, saying: To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the Euphrates.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The covenant is stated as already done, *I have given* this land, and for the first time it is given borders, from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates.

RASHI ON **"To your descendants I have given"**

A promise from God is considered as if it has already happened.

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PASUK 19 Bereishis 15:19 · 6 words

אֶת־הַקֵּינִי וְאֶת־הַקְּנִזִּי וְאֵת הַקַּדְמֹנִי

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַקֵּינִי
the הַ
קֵינִי
a Kenite or member of the tribe of Kajin
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַקְּנִזִּי
the הַ
קְנִזִּי
a Kenizzite or descendant of Kenaz
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְאֵת
and וְ
to אֵת
direct object marker

הַקַּדְמֹנִי
the הַ
Kadmonite קַדְמֹנִי
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

[The lands of] the Kenites [*Shalmites*], Kenizites, Kadmonites,

IN PLAIN TERMS

The land is then itemised by its peoples rather than its geography. The first three are named here.

RASHI ON "The Kenites"

Ten nations are listed here, [yet] He gave to them only [the land] of Seven Nations. The three [whose lands were not given], Edom, Moav, and Ammon which are [referred to here as]: Keini, Knizi, and Kadmoni are destined to be possessed in the future, as it is said: "They will overpower Edom and Moav and the Ammonites will obey them."

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PASUK 20 Bereishis 15:20 · 6 words

וְאֶת־הַחִתִּי וְאֶת־הַפְּרִזִּי וְאֶת־הָרְפָאִים

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַחִתִּי
the הַ
חִתִּי
a Chittite, or descendant of Cheth
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הַפְּרִזִּי
the הַ
a Perizzite פְּרִזִּי
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

הָרְפָאִים
the הָ
a giant רְפָאִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

TRANSLATION

The Chittites, Perizites, the Refa′im [*the mighty ones*],

IN PLAIN TERMS

The list continues. Naming who is there now is also naming what the promise has to displace.

RASHI ON "The Refa'im"

[Refers to] the Land of Og [King of Bashan] about which it is said: "That [Bashan] is called the land of the Repha′im."

Metsudah Rashi Chumash, 2009 · CC BY.

PASUK 21 Bereishis 15:21 · 8 words

וְאֶת־הָאֱמֹרִי וְאֶת־הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְאֶת־הַגִּרְגָּשִׁי וְאֶת־הַיְבוּסִי {ס}

וְאֶת־ and וְ to אֶת *direct object marker*	**הָאֱמֹרִי** the הָ an Emorite אֱמֹרִי א־מ־ר shoresh *noun · masculine · singular · absolute state*	**וְאֶת־** and וְ to אֶת *direct object marker*	**הַכְּנַעֲנִי** the הַ כְּנַעֲנִי a Kenaanite or inhabitant of Kenaan *noun · masculine · singular · absolute state*
וְאֶת־ and וְ to אֶת *direct object marker*	**הַגִּרְגָּשִׁי** the הַ a Girgashite גִּרְגָּשִׁי *noun · masculine · singular · absolute state*	**וְאֶת־** and וְ to אֶת *direct object marker*	**הַיְבוּסִי** the הַ יְבוּסִי a Jebusite or inhabitant of Jebus *noun · masculine · singular · absolute state*

TRANSLATION

The Emorites, Canaanites Girgashites and Yevusites.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Ten peoples in all, ending with the Yevusite. The perek that began with a childless man asking what he would be given ends with a bounded, populated land.

CHAPTER 14

Bereishis Perek 16

Hagar and the birth of Yishmael

✦ ✦ ✦

PASUK 1 Bereishis 16:1 · 11 words

וְשָׂרַי אֵשֶׁת אַבְרָם לֹא יָלְדָה לוֹ וְלָהּ שִׁפְחָה מִצְרִית וּשְׁמָהּ הָגָר

וְשָׂרַי
and וְ
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

אֵשֶׁת
woman אֵשֶׁת
א-ש-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

לֹא
not, no לֹא
negative particle

יָלְדָה
to give birth יָלְדָה
י-ל-ד shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd feminine singular

לוֹ
to / for ל
his/her/its וֹ

וְלָהּ
and וְ
to / for לְ
his/her/its הָ

שִׁפְחָה
a maidservant שִׁפְחָה
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

מִצְרִית
מִצְרִית
a Mitsrite, or inhabitant of Mitsrajim
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

הָגָר

Hagar הָגָר
proper name

וּשְׁמָהּ

and וּ
name, honor שְׁמָ
his/her/its הּ
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

Avram's wife Sarai had not borne him children. She had an Egyptian handmaid whose name was Hagar.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The perek opens on the unresolved problem: Sarai has borne no children. The second half of the pasuk introduces the person through whom the next events happen, an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar.

RASHI ON **"An Egyptian handmaid"**

She was Pharaoh's daughter. When he [Pharaoh] saw the miracles that were performed for Sarah, he said: "Better that my daughter be a servant-maid in this house rather than the mistress of another house."

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PASUK 2 Bereishis 16:2 · 20 words

וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרַי אֶל־אַבְרָם הִנֵּה־נָא עֲצָרַנִי ה׳ מִלֶּדֶת בֹּא־נָא אֶל־שִׁפְחָתִי אוּלַי אִבָּנֶה מִמֶּנָּה וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם לְקוֹל שָׂרָי

וַתֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say תֹּאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

הִנֵּה־
!look הִנֵּה
demonstrative

נָא
now please נָא
exhortation

עֲצָרַנִי
to inclose עָצַר
my נִי
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

מִלֶּדֶת
from מִ
to give birth לֶדֶת
י־ל־ד shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

בֹּא־
to bring to, give בֹּא
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

נָא
now please נָא
exhortation

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

שִׁפְחָתִי
a maidservant שִׁפְחָה
my י
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אוּלַי
if not, maybe אוּלַי
adverb

אִבָּנֶה
to build אִבָּנֶה
ב־נ־ה shoresh
Nifal · imperfect · 1st common singular

מִמֶּנָּה
from, out of מִמֶּ
his/her/its נָּה
preposition

וַיִּשְׁמַע
and וַ
to hear attentively יִשְׁמַע
ש־מ־ע shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

לְקוֹל
to / for לְ
voice, sound קוֹל
ק־ו־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שָׂרָי
Sarai שָׂרָי
proper name

TRANSLATION

Sarai said to Avram: See now, Hashem has restrained me from having children; pray [*now*], come to my handmaid perhaps I will be built-up through her. Avram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Sarai reads her childlessness as coming from God, and proposes a solution. The closing clause is stated without comment: Avram listened to the voice of Sarai.

RASHI ON **"Perhaps I will be built-up through her"**

This teaches that a person with no children is not considered "built-up" but, rather, "demolished" [i.e., not established].

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PASUK 3 Bereishis 16:3 · 21 words

וַתִּקַּח שָׂרַי אֵשֶׁת־אַבְרָם אֶת־הָגָר הַמִּצְרִית שִׁפְחָתָהּ מִקֵּץ עֶשֶׂר שָׁנִים לְשֶׁבֶת אַבְרָם בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָם אִישָׁהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה

וַתִּקַּח
and וַ
to take תִּקַּח
shoresh ל-ק-ח
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

אֵשֶׁת־
woman אֵשֶׁת
shoresh א-ש-ה
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

הָגָר
Hagar הָגָר
proper name

הַמִּצְרִית
the הַ
מִצְרִית
a Mitsrite, or inhabitant of Mitsrajim
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

שִׁפְחָתָהּ
a maidservant שִׁפְחָתָ
his/her/its הּ
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

מִקֵּץ
from מִ
an extremity קֵץ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

לְשֶׁבֶת
to / for לְ
to sit, dwell, remain שֶׁבֶת
י-ש-ב shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

שָׁנִים
year שָׁנִים
ש-נ-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · plural · absolute state

עֶשֶׂר
ten עֶשֶׂר
ע-ש-ר shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

לְאַבְרָם
to / for לְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

אֹתָהּ
to אֹתָ
his/her/its הּ
direct object marker

וַתִּתֵּן
and וַ
to give תִּתֵּן
נ-ת-נ shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

כְּנָעַן
Canaan כְּנָעַן
proper name

בְּאֶרֶץ
in / with / by בְּ
the earth אֶרֶץ
א-ר-צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

לְאִשָּׁה
to / for לְ
woman אִשָּׁה
א-ש-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

לוֹ
to / for לְ
his/her/its וֹ

אִישָׁהּ
man, male person אִישׁ
his/her/its הּ
א-י-ש shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

Sarai, the wife of Avram took Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, at the end of ten years that Avram had lived in the Land of Canaan and gave her to Avram her husband to be his wife.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The Torah dates it, ten years in the land of Canaan, and repeats everyone's status in full: Sarai wife of Avram, Hagar the Egyptian her maidservant, given to Avram her husband as a wife. Every relationship in the sentence is about to be strained.

RASHI ON "Sarai took"

[Meaning:] she took her with [kind] words: "How fortunate you are that you are privileged to cleave to as holy a body as this."

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PASUK 4 Bereishis 16:4 · 10 words

וַיָּבֹא אֶל־הָגָר וַתַּהַר וַתֵּרֶא כִּי הָרָתָה וַתֵּקַל גְּבִרְתָּהּ בְּעֵינֶיהָ

וַיָּבֹא
and וַ
to bring to, give יָבֹא
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

הָגָר
Hagar הָגָר
proper name

וַתַּהַר
and וַ
to be pregnant, conceive תַּהַר
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

וַתֵּרֶא
and וַ
to see תֵּרֶא
ר־א־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

הָרָתָה
to be pregnant, conceive הָרָתָה
Qal · perfect · 3rd feminine singular

וַתֵּקַל
and וַ
to curse, to treat lightly תֵּקַל
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

גְּבִרְתָּהּ
mistress גְּבִרְתָּ
his/her/its הּ
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

בְּעֵינֶיהָ
in / with / by בְּ
eye עֵינֶי
his/her/its הָ
ע־י־נ shoresh
noun · both · dual · construct state

TRANSLATION

He came to Hagar and she conceived. When she realized that she was pregnant, her mistress became slighted in her eyes.

IN PLAIN TERMS

She conceives, and the thing that was supposed to solve the problem creates a new one: her mistress became light in her eyes. Nothing is said about what Hagar did.

RASHI ON **”He came to Hagar and she conceived“**

From the first marital union.

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PASUK 5 Bereishis 16:5 · 19 words

וַתֹּאמֶר שָׂרַי אֶל־אַבְרָם חֲמָסִי עָלֶיךָ אָנֹכִי נָתַתִּי שִׁפְחָתִי בְּחֵיקֶךָ וַתֵּרֶא כִּי הָרָתָה וָאֵקַל בְּעֵינֶיהָ יִשְׁפֹּט ה׳ בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶיךָ

וַתֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say תֹּאמֶר
shoresh א־מ־ר
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

חֲמָסִי
violence חֲמָס
my י
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עָלֶיךָ
above, over, upon עָלֶי
your ךָ
preposition

אָנֹכִי
I am אָנֹכִי
personal pronoun

נָתַתִּי
to give נָתַתִּי
shoresh נ־ת־נ
Qal · perfect · 1st common singular

שִׁפְחָתִי
a maidservant שִׁפְחָה
my י
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

בְּחֵיקֶךָ
in / with / by בְּ
the bosom חֵיק
your ךָ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וַתֵּרֶא
and וַ
to see תֵּרֶא
shoresh ר־א־ה
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

בְּעֵינֶיהָ

in / with / by בְּ
eye עֵינֶי
his/her/its הָ
ע־י־ן shoresh
noun · both · dual · construct state

וָאֵקַל

and וָ
to curse, to treat lightly אֵקַל
Qal · wayyiqtol · 1st common singular

הָרָתָה

to be pregnant, conceive הָרָתָה
Qal · perfect · 3rd feminine singular

וּבֵינֶיךָ

and וּ
between, either...or בֵּינֶי
your ךָ
preposition

בֵּינִי

between, either...or בֵּינִ
my י
preposition

ה׳

Hashem ה׳
proper name

יִשְׁפֹּט

to judge יִשְׁפֹּט
ש־פ־ט shoresh
Qal · jussive · 3rd masculine singular

TRANSLATION

Sarai said to Avram: The insult against me is your fault [*I have a judgment against you*]. I gave my maid to you and when she saw that she had conceived, I became slighted in her eyes. Let Hashem judge between me and you.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Sarai holds Avram responsible and puts it in the language of a legal claim. She retells the events of pesukim 2 to 4 as she experienced them, and asks God to judge between them.

RASHI ON "The insult against me is your fault"

[Meaning:] for the wrong that had been done to me I call for you to be punished. [For] when you prayed to God: "What will You give me since I continue to be childless?" you prayed only for yourself. You should have prayed for us both and I would have been remembered along with you. Furthermore: "You have unrightfully withheld your words from me for you have heard my shame and remained silent."

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PASUK 6 Bereishis 16:6 · 15 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֶל־שָׂרַי הִנֵּה שִׁפְחָתֵךְ בְּיָדֵךְ עֲשִׂי־לָהּ הַטּוֹב בְּעֵינָיִךְ וַתְּעַנֶּהָ שָׂרַי וַתִּבְרַח מִפָּנֶיהָ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
shoresh א־מ־ר
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

הִנֵּה
!look הִנֵּה
demonstrative

שִׁפְחָתֵךְ
a maidservant שִׁפְחָתֵ
your ךְ
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

בְּיָדֵךְ
in / with / by בְּ
hand יָדֵ
your ךְ
יָד milah
noun · both · singular · construct state

עֲשִׂי־
to make עֲשִׂי
shoresh ע־ש־ה
Qal · imperative · 2nd feminine singular

לָהּ
to / for לָ
his/her/its ה

שָׂרַי

Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

וַתְּעַנֶּהָ

and וַ
to depress תְּעַנֶּ
his/her/its הָ
Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

בְּעֵינָיִךְ

in / with / by בְּ
eye עֵינָי
your ךְ
ע-י-נ shoresh
noun · both · dual · construct state

הַטּוֹב

the הַ
good, well טוֹב
ט-ו-ב shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

מִפָּנֶיהָ

from מִ
face, before פָּנֶי
his/her/its הָ
פ-נ-ה shoresh
noun · both · plural · construct state

וַתִּבְרַח

and וַ
to bolt תִּבְרַח
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

TRANSLATION

Avram said to Sarai: [The fate of] your maid is in your hands, do with her as you see fit. Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she [Hagar] ran away from her.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Avram hands the matter back: she is in your hand, do as you see fit. Sarai afflicts her, and Hagar runs. The pasuk states each action flatly, and assigns blame to no one.

RASHI ON "Sarai dealt harshly with her"

She made her work hard.

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PASUK 7 Bereishis 16:7 · 11 words

וַיִּמְצָאָהּ מַלְאַךְ ה׳ עַל־עֵין הַמַּיִם בַּמִּדְבָּר עַל־הָעַיִן בְּדֶרֶךְ שׁוּר

וַיִּמְצָאָהּ
and וַ
to find, to get יִּמְצָא
his/her/its הָ
מ־צ־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

מַלְאַךְ
a messenger מַלְאַךְ
מַלְאָךְ milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

עַל־
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

עֵין
eye עַיִן
ע־י־נ shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

הַמַּיִם
the הַ
water מַיִם
מ־י־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

בַּמִּדְבָּר
in / with / by בַּ
open field, desert מִדְבָּר
ד־ב־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

עַל־
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

הָעַיִן
the הָ
eye עַיִן
ע־י־נ shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

בְּדֶרֶךְ
in / with / by בְּ
a path or way דֶּרֶךְ
ד־ר־כ shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

שׁוּר
Shur, a place שׁוּר
proper name

TRANSLATION

An angel of Hashem found her by a spring of water in the desert, at the spring on the road to Shur [*Chagar*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

An angel finds her, the first appearance of an angel in the Torah, at a spring in the wilderness, on the road back toward Egypt. She is going home.

PASUK 8 Bereishis 16:8 · 15 words

וַיֹּאמַר הָגָר שִׁפְחַת שָׂרַי אֵי־מִזֶּה בָאת וְאָנָה תֵלֵכִי וַתֹּאמֶר מִפְּנֵי שָׂרַי גְּבִרְתִּי אָנֹכִי בֹרַחַת

וַיֹּאמַר
and וַ
to say יֹאמַר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

הָגָר
Hagar הָגָר
proper name

שִׁפְחַת
a maidservant שִׁפְחָה
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

אֵי־
?where? thus how אֵי
interrogative

מִזֶּה
from מִ
this or that זֶה
demonstrative pronoun

בָאת
to bring to, give בָּאת
ב־ו־א shoresh
Qal · perfect · 2nd feminine singular

וְאָנָה
and וְ
where, when, hither, thither אָנָה
interrogative

תֵלֵכִי
to walk, carry תֵּלֵכִי
י־ל־כ shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 2nd feminine singular

וַתֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say תֹּאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

מִפְּנֵי
from מִ
face, before פְּנֵי
פ־נ־ה shoresh
noun · both · plural · construct state

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

גְּבִרְתִּי
mistress גְּבִרְתִּ
my י
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אָנֹכִי
I am אָנֹכִי
personal pronoun

בֹרַחַת
to bolt בֹּרַחַת
Qal · participle · feminine singular

TRANSLATION

And he said: Hagar, handmaid of Sarai, from where have you come and where are you going? She said: I am running away from my mistress, Sarai.

IN PLAIN TERMS

She is addressed by her position, Hagar maidservant of Sarai, and asked where she has come from and where she is going. She answers only the first half.

RASHI ON ”“

From where have you come? [Meaning:] “From where have you come?” [Actually] he [the angel] knew. It was only to give her an opening, to enter into conversation with her. The expression אֵי מִזֶּה [means:] Where is the place about which you can say, “From this [place] I have come.”

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PASUK 9 Bereishis 16:9 · 10 words

וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאַךְ ה׳ שׁוּבִי אֶל־גְּבִרְתֵּךְ וְהִתְעַנִּי תַּחַת יָדֶיהָ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹּאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לָהּ
to / for לָ
his/her/its הּ

מַלְאַךְ
a messenger מַלְאַךְ
מִלְאָךְ milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

שׁוּבִי
to turn back שׁוּבִי
ש־ו־ב shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd feminine singular

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

גְּבִרְתֵּךְ
mistress גְּבִרְתֵּ
your ךְ
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

יָדֶיהָ

hand יָדֶי
his/her/its הָ
יָד milah
noun · both · dual · construct state

תַּחַת

below, underneath תַּחַת
preposition

וְהִתְעַנִּי

and וְ
to depress הִתְעַנִּי
Hitpael · imperative · 2nd feminine singular

TRANSLATION

The angel of Hashem said to her: Return to your mistress and submit yourself to her.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The instruction is hard: go back, and submit. No promise softens it, and nothing is said about Sarai's conduct.

RASHI ON **"The angel said to her, etc"**

For each statement [of these three verses] a different angel was sent to her. Therefore, "angel" is used for each and every statement.

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PASUK 10 Bereishis 16:10 · 11 words

וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאַךְ ה׳ הַרְבָּה אַרְבֶּה אֶת־זַרְעֵךְ וְלֹא יִסָּפֵר מֵרֹב

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹּאמֶר
ר־מ־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לָהּ
to / for לָ
his/her/its הּ

מַלְאַךְ
a messenger מַלְאַךְ
מְלָאָךְ milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

הַרְבָּה
to increase הַרְבָּה
ר־ב־ה shoresh
Hifil · infinitive absolute

אַרְבֶּה
to increase אַרְבֶּה
ר־ב־ה shoresh
Hifil · imperfect · 1st common singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

זַרְעֵךְ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעֵ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וְלֹא
and וְ
not, no לֹא
negative particle

יִסָּפֵר
to count, to reckon יִסָּפֵר
ס־פ־ר shoresh
Nifal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

מֵרֹב
from מֵ
abundance רֹב
ר־ב־ב shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

The angel of Hashem said to her: I will greatly multiply your descendants that they can not be counted because of their great number.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Then the promise, descendants too numerous to count. The same blessing given to Avram is given to a runaway maidservant, in nearly the same words.

PASUK 11 Bereishis 16:11 · 16 words

וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מַלְאַךְ ה׳ הִנָּךְ הָרָה וְיֹלַדְתְּ בֵּן וְקָרָאת שְׁמוֹ יִשְׁמָעֵאל כִּי־שָׁמַע ה׳ אֶל־עָנְיֵךְ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
shoresh א־מ־ר
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לָהּ
to / for לָ
his/her/its הּ

מַלְאַךְ
a messenger מַלְאַךְ
מַלְאָךְ milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

הִנָּךְ
!look הִנֵּ
your ךָ
demonstrative

הָרָה
pregnant הָרָה
adjective · feminine · singular

וְיֹלַדְתְּ
and וְ
to give birth יֹלַדְתְּ
shoresh י־ל־ד
Qal · participle · feminine singular

בֵּן
son, builder בֵּן
shoresh ב־נ־ה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְקָרָאת
and וְ
to name קָרָאת
shoresh ק־ר־א
Qal · sequential perfect · 2nd feminine singular

שְׁמוֹ
name, honor שְׁמ
his/her/its וֹ
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

יִשְׁמָעֵאל
Yishmael יִשְׁמָעֵאל
proper name

כִּי־
because, since כִּי
conjunction

שָׁמַע
to hear attentively שָׁמַע
shoresh ש־מ־ע
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

עָנְיֵךְ
depression עֳנִי
your ךְ
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

The angel of Hashem said to her: Behold you will conceive, and give birth to a son. You shall name him Yishmael, for Hashem has heard [*accepted*] your prayer.

IN PLAIN TERMS

She is told she is carrying a son and given his name, and the name is explained: Hashem has heard your affliction. Yishmael means precisely that.

RASHI ON **"Behold you will conceive"**

[Meaning: "When you return you will conceive," as in: "Behold you will conceive," referring to Monoach's wife.

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PASUK 12 Bereishis 16:12 · 14 words

וְהוּא יִהְיֶה פֶּרֶא אָדָם יָדוֹ בַכֹּל וְיַד כֹּל בּוֹ וְעַל־פְּנֵי כָל־אֶחָיו יִשְׁכֹּן

וְהוּא
and וְ
he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

יִהְיֶה
to be יִהְיֶה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

פֶּרֶא
the onager פֶּרֶא
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אָדָם
human being אָדָם
א־ד־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

יָדוֹ
hand יָד
his/her/its וֹ
יָד milah
noun · both · singular · construct state

בַכֹּל
in / with / by בַּ
all, every כֹּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְיַד
and וְ
hand יַד
יָד milah
noun · both · singular · construct state

כֹּל
all, every כֹּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בּוֹ
in / with / by בְּ
his/her/its וֹ

וְעַל־
and וְ
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

אֶחָיו

brother, sibling אָחִי
his/her/its ו
אָח milah
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

כָּל־

all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

פְּנֵי

face, before פְּנֵי
פ־נ־ה shoresh
noun · both · plural · construct state

יִשְׁכֹּן

to reside or permanently stay יִשְׁכֹּן
ש־כ־נ shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

TRANSLATION

He will be a wild, uncivilized man [*rebel against people*]. His hand [will be] against everyone [*He will need everyone*] and everyone's hand will be against him [*and everyone's hand will need him*]; and in the presence of all his brothers he will dwell.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The description is unflinching and not obviously a blessing, a wild man, his hand against all and every hand against him, and it ends with him dwelling in the presence of all his brothers.

RASHI ON "A wild, uncivilized man"

One who loves the wilderness to hunt wild animals, as is written [concerning Yishmael]: "He settled in the wilderness of Paran [where] he became an expert archer."

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PASUK 13 Bereishis 16:13 · 15 words

וַתִּקְרָא שֵׁם־ה׳ הַדֹּבֵר אֵלֶיהָ אַתָּה אֵל רָאִי כִּי אָמְרָה הֲגַם הֲלֹם רָאִיתִי אַחֲרֵי רֹאִי

וַתִּקְרָא
and וַ
to name תִּקְרָא
ק־ר־א shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

שֵׁם־
name, honor שֵׁם
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

הַדֹּבֵר
the הַ
to speak דֹּבֵר
ד־ב־ר shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

אֵלֶיהָ
near, toward, among אֵלֶי
his/her/its הָ
preposition

אַתָּה
you אַתָּה
personal pronoun

אֵל
strength אֵל
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

רָאִי
רָאִי
sight, whether abstractly or concretely
ר־א־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

אָמְרָה
to say אָמְרָה
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd feminine singular

הֲגַם
(question) הֲ
even, also, too גַּם
adverb

הֲלֹם
here to הֲלֹם
adverb

רָאִיתִי
to see רָאִיתִי
ר־א־ה shoresh
Qal · perfect · 1st common singular

אַחֲרֵי
after אַחֲרֵי
preposition

רֹאִי
to see רֹאִי
my י
ר־א־ה shoresh
Qal · participle · masculine singular

TRANSLATION

She called [*She prayed in*] the Name Hashem Who had spoken to her: [*She said*] You are Almighty Who sees [*everything*], for she said: Have I also seen here [a vestige] after my having seen? [*Have I also began to see here [a vestige] after it was revealed to me?*]

IN PLAIN TERMS

She names God, the only person in the Torah to do so. The name she gives Him is about sight: the God who sees.

RASHI ON **"You are Almighty Who sees"**

[The word רָאִי] is punctuated with a chataf kometz because it is a noun, [i.e.,] a God of seeing, because He sees the humiliation of the humiliated.

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PASUK 14 Bereishis 16:14 · 12 words

עַל־כֵּן קָרָא לַבְּאֵר בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי הִנֵּה בֵין־קָדֵשׁ וּבֵין בָּרֶד

לַבְּאֵר
to / for לַ
a pit בְּאֵר
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

קָרָא
to name קָרָא
ק־ר־א shoresh
Qal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

כֵּן
rightly so כֵּן
demonstrative

עַל־
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

הִנֵּה
!look הִנֵּה
demonstrative

רֹאִי
Be'er Lachai Ro'i, a well רֹאִי
proper name

לַחַי
Be'er Lachai Ro'i, a well לַחַי
proper name

בְּאֵר
Be'er Lachai Ro'i, a well בְּאֵר
proper name

בָּרֶד
Bared, a place בָּרֶד
proper name

וּבֵין
and וּ
between, either...or בֵּין
preposition

קָדֵשׁ
Kadeish, a place קָדֵשׁ
proper name

בֵין־
between, either...or בֵּין
preposition

TRANSLATION

Therefore the well was called: Be′er Lachai Ro′i [*the well at which a living angel appeared*]; it is between Kadeish [*Rekem*] and Bared [*Chagar*].

IN PLAIN TERMS

The well keeps the name, and the Torah locates it. What happened to her is fixed to a place on the map.

RASHI ON "Be'er Lachai Ro'i"

As he [Onkelos] translates: "A well that a living angel appeared upon it."

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PASUK 15 Bereishis 16:15 · 12 words

וַתֵּלֶד הָגָר לְאַבְרָם בֵּן וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָם שֵׁם־בְּנוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יָלְדָה הָגָר יִשְׁמָעֵאל

וַתֵּלֶד
and וַ
to give birth תֵּלֶד
shoresh י־ל־ד
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd feminine singular

הָגָר
Hagar הָגָר
proper name

לְאַבְרָם
to / for לְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

בֵּן
son, builder בֵּן
shoresh ב־נ־ה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וַיִּקְרָא
and וַ
to name יִקְרָא
shoresh ק־ר־א
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

שֵׁם־
name, honor שֵׁם
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בְּנוֹ
son, builder בֵּן
his/her/its וֹ
shoresh ב־נ־ה
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֲשֶׁר־
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

יָלְדָה
to give birth יָלְדָה
shoresh י־ל־ד
Qal · perfect · 3rd feminine singular

הָגָר
Hagar הָגָר
proper name

יִשְׁמָעֵאל
Yishmael יִשְׁמָעֵאל
proper name

TRANSLATION

Hagar bore Avram a son and Avram named his son, that Hagar bore him, Yishmael.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Hagar bears the son, and Avram gives him the name, the name the angel gave her. He was not present for that conversation.

RASHI ON "And Avram named, etc"

Though Avram did not hear the words of the angel who said, "And call his name Yishmael," yet, the spirit of prophecy rested upon him and he called him Yishmael.

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PASUK 16 Bereishis 16:16 · 11 words

וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־שְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים בְּלֶדֶת־הָגָר אֶת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל לְאַבְרָם {ס}

וְאַבְרָם
and וְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

בֶּן־
son, builder בֶּן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שְׁמֹנִים
eighty שְׁמֹנִים
ש־מ־נ shoresh
adjective · both · plural

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

וְשֵׁשׁ
and וְ
six שֵׁשׁ
שֵׁשׁ milah
adjective · feminine · singular

שָׁנִים
year שָׁנִים
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · plural · absolute state

בְּלֶדֶת־
in / with / by בְּ
to give birth לֶדֶת
י־ל־ד shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

הָגָר
Hagar הָגָר
proper name

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

יִשְׁמָעֵאל
Yishmael יִשְׁמָעֵאל
proper name

לְאַבְרָם
to / for לְ
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

TRANSLATION

Avram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Yishmael to Avram.

IN PLAIN TERMS

A dated endnote: Avram was eighty-six. It closes the perek the way business is closed, and sets up the gap of thirteen years before the next one opens.

RASHI ON "Avram was eighty-six, etc"

This is written in praise of Yishmael, to let us know that he was thirteen years old when he was circumcised and did not oppose it.

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CHAPTER 15

Bereishis Perek 17

Circumcision, and the new names

✦ ✦ ✦

PASUK 1 Bereishis 17:1 · 20 words

וַיְהִי אַבְרָם בֶּן־תִּשְׁעִים שָׁנָה וְתֵשַׁע שָׁנִים וַיֵּרָא ה׳ אֶל־אַבְרָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי־אֵל שַׁדַּי הִתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנַי וֶהְיֵה תָמִים

וַיְהִי
and וַ
to be יְהִי
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

בֶּן־
son, builder בֶּן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

תִּשְׁעִים
ninety תִּשְׁעִים
adjective · both · plural

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

וְתֵשַׁע
and וְ
nine or ninth תֵשַׁע
adjective · feminine · singular

שָׁנִים
year שָׁנִים
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · plural · absolute state

וַיֵּרָא
and וַ
to see יֵרָא
ר־א־ה shoresh
Nifal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

ה׳
Hashem ה׳
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹּאמֶר
א-מ-ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֵלָיו
near, toward, among אֵלָי
his/her/its ו
preposition

אֲנִי־
I am אֲנִי
personal pronoun

אֵל
Almighty אֵל
proper name

שַׁדַּי
Shaddai שַׁדַּי
proper name

הִתְהַלֵּךְ
to walk הִתְהַלֵּךְ
ה-ל-כ shoresh
Hitpael · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

לְפָנַי
to / for לְ
face, before פָּנַי
my י
פ-נ-ה shoresh
noun · both · plural · construct state

וְהְיֵה
and וְ
to be הְיֵה
ה-י-ה shoresh
Qal · imperative · 2nd masculine singular

תָמִים
entire תָמִים
ת-מ-מ shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

TRANSLATION

When Avram was ninety-nine years old, Hashem appeared [*became revealed*] to Avram and said to him: I am Almighty Shaddai, walk [*worship*] before Me and be perfect.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Thirteen silent years have passed. Avram is ninety-nine, and the address is a demand rather than a promise: walk before Me and be whole.

RASHI ON "I am Almighty Shaddai"

[Meaning:] "I am the One Whose Godliness suffices for every creature. Therefore, walk before Me and I will be your God and Protector." Similarly, wherever it appears in Tanach its explanation is thus: "He is sufficient." However, it also depends on the context.

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PASUK 2 Bereishis 17:2 · 8 words

וְאֶתְּנָה בְרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וְאַרְבֶּה אוֹתְךָ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד

וְאֶתְּנָה
and וְ
to give אֶתְּנָה
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · cohortative · 1st common singular

בְרִיתִי
to make a pact בְּרִית
my י
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

בֵּינִי
between, either...or בֵּין
my י
preposition

וּבֵינֶךָ
and וּ
between, either...or בֵּין
your ךָ
preposition

וְאַרְבֶּה
and וְ
to increase אַרְבֶּה
ר־ב־ה shoresh
Hifil · cohortative · 1st common singular

אוֹתְךָ
to אוֹת
your ךָ
direct object marker

בִּמְאֹד
in / with / by בְּ
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

מְאֹד
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

TRANSLATION

I will give My covenant between Me [*My Word*] and you, and I will multiply you[r descendants] exceedingly.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The covenant is announced before its terms. Note the order across this perek, the covenant is given, then named, then its sign is commanded.

RASHI ON **"I will give My covenant"**

[This refers to] the covenant of love and the covenant for you to possess the land by [your fulfilling] this precept.

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PASUK 3 Bereishis 17:3 · 8 words

וַיִּפֹּל אַבְרָם עַל־פָּנָיו וַיְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים לֵאמֹר

וַיִּפֹּל
and וַ
to fall יִפֹּל
נ־פ־ל shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

עַל־
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

פָּנָיו
face, before פָּנֶי
his/her/its ו
פ־נ־ה shoresh
noun · both · plural · construct state

וַיְדַבֵּר
and וַ
to speak יְדַבֵּר
ד־ב־ר shoresh
Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אִתּוֹ
with, by, at, among אִת
his/her/its ו
preposition

אֱלֹהִים
gods in the ordinary sense אֱלֹהִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

לֵאמֹר
to / for לֵ
to say אמר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

TRANSLATION

Avram fell on his face. Elohim spoke with him, saying:

IN PLAIN TERMS

He falls on his face, and only then does God speak further. The gesture interrupts the speech rather than following it.

RASHI ON "Avram fell on his face"

From fear of the Divine Presence. Because prior to being circumcised he did not have the strength to stand while the Divine Presence stood over him. It is [to this reference] that it is stated concerning Bilam, "Fallen down and eyes open." I found this in the Beraisa of R. Eliezer.

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PASUK 4 Bereishis 17:4 · 8 words

אֲנִי הִנֵּה בְרִיתִי אִתָּךְ וְהָיִיתָ לְאַב הֲמוֹן גּוֹיִם

אֲנִי
I am אֲנִי
personal pronoun

הִנֵּה
!look הִנֵּה
demonstrative

בְרִיתִי
to make a pact בְּרִית
my י
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אִתָּךְ
with, by, at, among אִתּ
your ךָ
preposition

וְהָיִיתָ
and וְ
to be הָיִיתָ
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · sequential perfect · 2nd masculine singular

לְאַב
to / for לְ
father, parent אַב
אָב milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הֲמוֹן
a noise, tumult, crowd הֲמוֹן
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

גּוֹיִם
foreign nation גּוֹיִם
ג־ו־י shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

TRANSLATION

As for Me, here is My covenant with you; you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.

IN PLAIN TERMS

"As for Me", God states His side first. Avram is to be the father of a multitude of nations, which is more than the great nation promised in 12:2.

PASUK 5 Bereishis 17:5 · 14 words

וְלֹא־יִקָּרֵא עוֹד אֶת־שִׁמְךָ אַבְרָם וְהָיָה שִׁמְךָ אַבְרָהָם כִּי אַב־הֲמוֹן גּוֹיִם נְתַתִּיךָ

וְלֹא־
and וְ
not, no לֹא
negative particle

יִקָּרֵא
to name יִקָּרֵא
ק־ר־א shoresh
Nifal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

עוֹד
again, repeatedly, still עוֹד
adverb

אֶת־
to אֵת
direct object marker

שִׁמְךָ
name, honor שֵׁמְ
your ךָ
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָם
Avram אַבְרָם
proper name

וְהָיָה
and וְ
to be הָיָה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · sequential perfect · 3rd masculine singular

שִׁמְךָ
name, honor שֵׁמְ
your ךָ
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָהָם
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

אַב־
father, parent אַב
אָב milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הֲמוֹן
a noise, tumult, crowd הֲמוֹן
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

גּוֹיִם
foreign nation גּוֹיִם
ג־ו־י shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

נְתַתִּיךָ
to give נְתַתִּי
your ךָ
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · perfect · 1st common singular

TRANSLATION

No longer shall your name be called Avram, but your name shall be Avraham, for the father of a multitude of nations I have appointed you.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The name changes, and the pasuk explains it: *av hamon goyim*, father of a multitude of nations, is folded into *Avraham*. The book has used the name Avram for five perakim; from here on it cannot.

RASHI ON "For the father of a multitude of nations"

This is an acrostic of his name. The letter רי"ש which was originally in [his name] signifying that he was a father only to Aram which was his [original] country, whereas, now he was a father to the entire world and even the letter רי"ש, originally in his name, was, [nevertheless], not removed from its place. For even the letter יו"ד of Sarai's name had complained to the Divine Presence until it was added to Yehoshua's name as it is said: "Moshe called Hoshea bin Nun [by the name] Yehoshua.

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PASUK 6 Bereishis 17:6 · 9 words

וְהִפְרֵתִי אֹתְךָ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד וּנְתַתִּיךָ לְגוֹיִם וּמְלָכִים מִמְּךָ יֵצֵאוּ

וְהִפְרֵתִי
and וְ
to bear fruit הִפְרֵתִי
פ־ר־ה shoresh
Hifil · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

אֹתְךָ
to אֹתְ
your ךָ
direct object marker

בִּמְאֹד
in / with / by בְּ
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

מְאֹד
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

וּנְתַתִּיךָ
and וּ
to give נְתַתִּי
your ךָ
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

לְגוֹיִם
to / for לְ
foreign nation גוֹיִם
ג־ו־י shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

וּמְלָכִים
and וּ
king מְלָכִים
מ־ל־כ shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

מִמְּךָ
from, out of מִמְּ
your ךָ
preposition

יֵצְאוּ

to go out, bring out יֵצְאוּ

י־צ־א shoresh

Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine plural

TRANSLATION

I will make you exceedingly fruitful and I will make you into nations [*assemblies*]; and kings [*who rule over nations*] will descend from you.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Fruitful, nations, kings. The promise keeps widening, from descendants, to peoples, to rulers.

RASHI ON **"And I will make you into nations"**

[Referring to:] Israel and Edom. For he had already had Yishmael and He would not be revealing tidings concerning him.

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PASUK 7 Bereishis 17:7 · 16 words

וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ לְדֹרֹתָם לִבְרִית עוֹלָם לִהְיוֹת לְךָ לֵאלֹהִים וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ

וַהֲקִמֹתִי
and וַ
to rise הֲקִמֹתִי
ק־ו־מ shoresh
Hifil · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

בְּרִיתִי
to make a pact בְּרִית
my י
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

בֵּינִי
between, either...or בֵּין
my י
preposition

וּבֵינֶךָ
and ו
between, either...or בֵּין
your ךָ
preposition

וּבֵין
and ו
between, either...or בֵּין
preposition

זַרְעֲךָ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְע
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַחֲרֶיךָ
after אַחֲרֵי
your ךָ
preposition

לְדֹרֹתָם
to / for לְ
generation, age דֹּרָה
their ם
ד-ו-ר shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

לִבְרִית
to / for לְ
to make a pact בְּרִית
ב-ר-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

עוֹלָם
eternity, always עוֹלָם
ע-ל-מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לִהְיוֹת
to / for לְ
to be הָיוֹת
ה-י-ה shoresh
Qal · infinitive construct

לְךָ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

לֵאלֹהִים
to / for לְ
gods in the ordinary sense אֱלֹהִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

וּלְזַרְעֲךָ
and וּ
to / for לְ
seed, plant, offspring זֶרַע
your ךָ
ז-ר-ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַחֲרֶיךָ
after אַחֲרֵי
your ךָ
preposition

TRANSLATION

I will sustain My covenant between Me [*My Word*] and you, and between your descendants after you throughout their generations as an eternal covenant, to be a God to you, and to your descendants after you.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The covenant is defined as eternal and generational, and its content is stated: to be a God to you and to your descendants after you. The land has not yet been mentioned.

RASHI ON "I will sustain My covenant"

And what is this covenant? To be a God to you.

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PASUK 8 Bereishis 17:8 · 16 words

וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אֵת אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ אֵת כָּל־אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן לַאֲחֻזַּת עוֹלָם
וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים

וְנָתַתִּי
and וְ
to give נָתַתִּי
נ־ת־נ shoresh
Qal · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

לְךָ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

וּלְזַרְעֲךָ
and וּ
to / for לְ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעַ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַחֲרֶיךָ
after אַחֲרֵי
your ךָ
preposition

אֵת
to אֵת
direct object marker

אֶרֶץ
the earth אֶרֶץ
א־ר־צ shoresh
noun · both · singular · construct state

מְגֻרֶיךָ
a temporary abode מְגֻרֵי
your ךָ
ג־ו־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

אֵת
to אֵת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אֶרֶץ

the earth אֶרֶץ

א-ר-צ shoresh

noun · both · singular · construct state

כְּנַעַן

Canaan כְּנַעַן

proper name

לַאֲחֻזַּת

to / for לַ

something seized אֲחֻזַּת

א-ח-ז shoresh

noun · feminine · singular · construct state

עוֹלָם

eternity, always עוֹלָם

ע-ל-מ shoresh

noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְהָיִיתִי

and וְ

to be הָיִיתִי

ה-י-ה shoresh

Qal · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

לָהֶם

to / for לָ

their הֶם

לֵאלֹהִים

to / for לֵ

gods in the ordinary sense אֱלֹהִים

noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

TRANSLATION

I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land of your temporary residence, all the land of Canaan as an eternal possession, and I will be a God to them.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Now the land, and with a sharp phrase: *the land of your sojournings*, the place he has lived in as a stranger, given as an eternal holding.

RASHI ON "As an eternal possession"

It is there that I will be a God to you. But, one who resides outside Eretz Yisrael is like someone who has no God.

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PASUK 9 Bereishis 17:9 · 12 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם וְאַתָּה אֶת־בְּרִיתִי תִשְׁמֹר אַתָּה וְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ לְדֹרֹתָם

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֱלֹהִים
gods in the ordinary sense אֱלֹהִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָהָם
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

וְאַתָּה
and וְ
you אַתָּה
personal pronoun

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

בְּרִיתִי
to make a pact בְּרִית
my י
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

תִשְׁמֹר
to protect, guard תִשְׁמֹר
ש־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 2nd masculine singular

אַתָּה
you אַתָּה
personal pronoun

וְזַרְעֲךָ
and וְ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְע
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַחֲרֶיךָ
after אַחֲרֵי
your ךָ
preposition

לְדֹרֹתָם
to / for לְ
generation, age דֹּר
their ם
ד־ו־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

TRANSLATION

Elohim said to Avraham: And as for you, you must preserve My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The turn to Avraham's side of it: *and as for you.* Until this pasuk everything has been what God will do.

RASHI ON **"And as for you"**

The letter [וְאַתָּה] וי"ו here [denotes] a continuation of the previous matter: [i.e.] "As for Me, here is My covenant with you," and you take heed to keep it. And by what means shall it be kept? "This is My covenant which you must preserve, … you shall be circumcised."

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PASUK 10 Bereishis 17:10 · 13 words

זֹאת בְּרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמְרוּ בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין זַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ הִמּוֹל לָכֶם כָּל־זָכָר

זֹאת

this one זֹאת

demonstrative pronoun

בְּרִיתִי

to make a pact בְּרִית

my י

ב־ר־ה shoresh

noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אֲשֶׁר

אֲשֶׁר

who, which, what, that, when, where, how

relative particle

תִּשְׁמְרוּ

to protect, guard תִּשְׁמְרוּ

ש־מ־ר shoresh

Qal · imperfect · 2nd masculine plural

בֵּינִי

between, either...or בֵּינ

my י

preposition

וּבֵינֵיכֶם

and וּ

between, either...or בֵּינֵי

your כֶם

preposition

וּבֵין

and וּ

between, either...or בֵּין

preposition

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

לָכֶם
to / for לְ
your כֶּם

הִמּוֹל
to circumcise הִמּוֹל
Nifal · infinitive absolute

אַחֲרֶיךָ
after אַחֲרֵי
your ךָ
preposition

זַרְעֲךָ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעַ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

זָכָר
male, masculine זָכָר
ז־כ־ר shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

TRANSLATION

This is My covenant which you must preserve between Me [*My Word*] and you, and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The obligation, stated in one line: every male among you shall be circumcised. For a covenant this large, the requirement is remarkably small and entirely physical.

RASHI ON "Between Me and you"

[Referring to:] those who are now alive.

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PASUK 11 Bereishis 17:11 · 9 words

וּנְמַלְתֶּם אֵת בְּשַׂר עָרְלַתְכֶם וְהָיָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם

וּנְמַלְתֶּם
and וּ
נְמַלְתֶּם
to become clipped or circumcised
Nifal · sequential perfect · 2nd masculine plural

אֵת
to אֵת
direct object marker

בְּשַׂר
flesh, body בָּשָׂר
ב־ש־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עָרְלַתְכֶם
the prepuce עָרְלָה
your כֶם
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

וְהָיָה
and וְ
to be הָיָה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · sequential perfect · 3rd masculine singular

לְאוֹת
to / for לְ
a sign, a banner אוֹת
noun · both · singular · construct state

בְּרִית
to make a pact בְּרִית
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

בֵּינִי
between, either...or בֵּין
my י
preposition

וּבֵינֵיכֶם
and וּ
between, either...or בֵּינֵי
your כֶם
preposition

TRANSLATION

You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin. This shall be the sign of the covenant between Me [*My Word*] and you.

IN PLAIN TERMS

And it is called a sign, the mark is not the covenant itself but the evidence of it.

RASHI ON "You shall circumcise"

[וּנְמַלְתֶּם] has the same meaning as וּמַלְתֶּם and the letter נו"ן is an addition that periodically appears in it, as the letter נו"ן in נוֹשַׁךְ and the letter נו"ן in וּנְמַלְתֶּם. נוֹשֵׁא has the same form as וּנְשָׂאתֶם But, the word יִמּוֹל is the form יִפָּעֵל, as in יֵעָשֶׂה [shall be done], [or] יֵאָכֵל [shall be eaten].

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PASUK 12 Bereishis 17:12 · 19 words

וּבֶן־שְׁמֹנַת יָמִים יִמּוֹל לָכֶם כָּל־זָכָר לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם יְלִיד בַּיִת וּמִקְנַת־כֶּסֶף מִכֹּל בֶּן־נֵכָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא מִזַּרְעֲךָ הוּא

וּבֶן־
and וּ
son, builder בֶּן
shoresh ב־נ־ה
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שְׁמֹנַת
a cardinal number, eight שְׁמֹנַת
shoresh ש־מ־נ
adjective · masculine · singular

יָמִים
day יָמִים
shoresh י־ו־מ
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

יִמּוֹל
to circumcise יִמּוֹל
Nifal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

לָכֶם
to / for לְ
your כֶּם

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
shoresh כ־ל־ל
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

זָכָר
male, masculine זָכָר
shoresh ז־כ־ר
adjective · masculine · singular

לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם
to / for לְ
generation, age דֹּרֹתֵי
your כֶּם
shoresh ד־ו־ר
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

יְלִיד
born יְלִיד
shoresh י־ל־ד
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בַּיִת
house בַּיִת
shoresh ב־נ־ה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

מִכֹּל

from מִ
all, every כֹּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

כֶּסֶף

silver, money כֶּסֶף
כ־ס־פ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וּמִקְנַת־

and וּ
a purchase, property מִקְנַת
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אֲשֶׁר

אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

נֵכָר

foreign, a stranger נֵכָר
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

בֶּן־

son, builder בֶּן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הוּא

he, it, self, this, that הוּא
personal pronoun

מִזַּרְעֲךָ

from מִ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְעַ
your ךָ
ז־ר־ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

לֹא

not, no לֹא
negative particle

TRANSLATION

At the age of eight days every male among you must be circumcised, throughout your generations; he that is a house-born [slave] or one that was bought with money from any stranger who is not your descendant.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The details: eight days old, every generation, and explicitly including those born in the household and those bought, not only the bloodline.

RASHI ON "House-born"

[Meaning:] to whom a maidservant gave birth in [your] house.

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PASUK 13 Bereishis 17:13 · 11 words

הִמּוֹל יִמּוֹל יְלִיד בֵּיתְךָ וּמִקְנַת כַּסְפֶּךָ וְהָיְתָה בְרִיתִי בִּבְשַׂרְכֶם לִבְרִית עוֹלָם

הִמּוֹל
to circumcise הִמּוֹל
Nifal · infinitive absolute

יִמּוֹל
to circumcise יִמּוֹל
Nifal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

יְלִיד
born יְלִיד
י־ל־ד shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בֵּיתְךָ
house בַּיִת
your ךָ
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וּמִקְנַת
and וּ
a purchase, property מִקְנָה
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

כַּסְפֶּךָ
silver, money כֶּסֶף
your ךָ
כ־ס־פ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וְהָיְתָה
and וְ
to be הָיָה
ה־י־ה shoresh
Qal · sequential perfect · 3rd feminine singular

בְרִיתִי
to make a pact בְּרִית
my י
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

בִּבְשַׂרְכֶם
in / with / by בְּ
flesh, body בָּשָׂר
your כֶם
ב־ש־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

לִבְרִית
to / for לְ
to make a pact בְּרִית
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

עוֹלָם
eternity, always עוֹלָם
ע־ל־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

Your house-born slaves must be circumcised, and also those bought with your money. This shall be My covenant in your flesh as an eternal covenant.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The inclusion is repeated for emphasis, and the covenant is located in the body: *My covenant in your flesh*.

RASHI ON **"Your house-born slaves must be circumcised"**

Here [the circumcision of יְלִיד בַּיִת] is repeated and it does not say, "On the eighth day" [as in v. 12], in order to teach you that there is a יְלִיד בַּיִת that is circumcised after eight days as is explained in Meseches Shabbos.

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PASUK 14 Bereishis 17:14 · 15 words

וְעָרֵל זָכָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִמּוֹל אֶת־בְּשַׂר עָרְלָתוֹ וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהִוא מֵעַמֶּיהָ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי הֵפַר {ס}

וְעָרֵל
and וְ
uncircumcised עָרֵל
adjective · masculine · singular

זָכָר
male, masculine זָכָר
ז־כ־ר shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

לֹא־
not, no לֹא
negative particle

יִמּוֹל
to circumcise יִמּוֹל
Nifal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

בְּשַׂר
flesh, body בְּשַׂר
ב־ש־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עָרְלָתוֹ

the prepuce עָרְלָת
his/her/its וֹ
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

וְנִכְרְתָה

and וְ
to make a covenant נִכְרְתָה
כ־ר־ת shoresh
Nifal · sequential perfect · 3rd feminine singular

הַנֶּפֶשׁ

the הַ
living creature נֶפֶשׁ
נ־פ־ש shoresh
noun · both · singular · absolute state

הַהִוא

the הַ
he, it, self, this, that הִוא
personal pronoun

מֵעַמֶּיהָ

from מֵ
people, tribe, troops עַמֶּי
his/her/its הָ
ע־מ־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

אֶת־

to אֶת
direct object marker

בְּרִיתִי

to make a pact בְּרִית
my י
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

הֵפַר

to break up הֵפַר
פ־ר־ר shoresh
Hifil · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

TRANSLATION

An uncircumcised male, who will not circumcise his foreskin, that soul [*man*] shall be cut off from its people; he has broken [*changed*] My covenant.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The consequence of refusal, stated once and without elaboration: that soul is cut off, for he has broken My covenant.

RASHI ON ”An uncircumcised male“

Here it teaches that circumcision [is performed] in that place where there is a distinction between male and female.

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PASUK 15 Bereishis 17:15 · 14 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבְרָהָם שָׂרַי אִשְׁתְּךָ לֹא־תִקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָהּ שָׂרָי כִּי שָׂרָה שְׁמָהּ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֱלֹהִים
gods in the ordinary sense אֱלֹהִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

אַבְרָהָם
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

שָׂרַי
Sarai שָׂרַי
proper name

אִשְׁתְּךָ
woman אִשָּׁה
your ךָ
א־ש־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

לֹא־
not, no לֹא
negative particle

תִקְרָא
to name תִקְרָא
ק־ר־א shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 2nd masculine singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

שְׁמָהּ
name, honor שֵׁם
his/her/its ה
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שָׂרָה
Sarah שָׂרָה
proper name

כִּי
because, since כִּי
conjunction

שָׂרָי
Sarai שָׂרָי
proper name

שְׁמָהּ
name, honor שֵׁם
his/her/its ה
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

And Elohim said to Avraham [As for] Sarai your wife, do not call her by the name Sarai, for Sarah is her name.

IN PLAIN TERMS

Sarai's name changes too, in the same form of words. She is not present for this, and the change is announced to Avraham.

RASHI ON **"Do not call her by the name Sarai"**

שָׂרַי implies "my princess" but not to others. But, her name will be Sarah, in a general sense for she will be a princess [שָׂרָה] to everyone.

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PASUK 16 Bereishis 17:16 · 14 words

וּבֵרַכְתִּי אֹתָהּ וְגַם נָתַתִּי מִמֶּנָּה לְךָ בֵּן וּבֵרַכְתִּיהָ וְהָיְתָה לְגוֹיִם מַלְכֵי עַמִּים מִמֶּנָּה יִהְיוּ

וּבֵרַכְתִּי
and וּ
to bless בֵּרַכְתִּי
ב-ר-כ shoresh
Piel · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

אֹתָהּ
to אֹתָ
his/her/its הּ
direct object marker

וְגַם
and וְ
even, also, too גַּם
accusative particle

נָתַתִּי
to give נָתַתִּי
נ-ת-נ shoresh
Qal · perfect · 1st common singular

מִמֶּנָּה
from, out of מִמֶּ
his/her/its נָּה
preposition

לְךָ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

בֵּן
son, builder בֵּן
ב-נ-ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וּבֵרַכְתִּיהָ
and וּ
to bless בֵּרַכְתִּי
his/her/its הָ
ב-ר-כ shoresh
Piel · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

וְהָיְתָה
and וְ
to be הָיְתָה
ה-י-ה shoresh
Qal · sequential perfect · 3rd feminine singular

מִמֶּנָּה

from, out of מִמֶּ
his/her/its נָּה
preposition

עַמִּים

people, tribe, troops עַמִּים
ע-מ-מ shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

מַלְכֵי

king מַלְכֵי
מ-ל-כ shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

לְגוֹיִם

to / for לְ
foreign nation גוֹיִם
ג-ו-י shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

יִהְיוּ

to be יִהְיוּ
ה-י-ה shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine plural

TRANSLATION

I will bless her, and I will also give you a son through her. I will bless her, and she will be [a mother] of nations [*assemblies*], kings of peoples [*who rule over nations*] will descend from her.

IN PLAIN TERMS

And then what has never been said before: a son from her. The blessings given to Avraham in pasuk 6, nations, kings, are repeated over Sarah almost word for word.

RASHI ON "I will bless her"

What is this blessing? It is that she reverted to her youthfulness, as it is said: "Now that I am worn out, shall I have the pleasure [of a son]."

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PASUK 17 Bereishis 17:17 · 17 words

וַיִּפֹּל אַבְרָהָם עַל־פָּנָיו וַיִּצְחָק וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלִבּוֹ הַלְּבֶן מֵאָה־שָׁנָה יִוָּלֵד וְאִם־שָׂרָה הֲבַת־תִּשְׁעִים שָׁנָה תֵּלֵד

וַיִּפֹּל
and וַ
to fall יִפֹּל
נ-פ-ל shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָהָם
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

עַל־
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

פָּנָיו
face, before פָּנֶי
his/her/its ו
פ-נ-ה shoresh
noun · both · plural · construct state

וַיִּצְחָק
and וַ
to laugh outright יִצְחָק
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א-מ-ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

בְּלִבּוֹ
in / with / by בְּ
heart, feelings לֵב
his/her/its ו
לֵב milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

הַלְּבֶן
the הַ
to / for לְ
son, builder בֶּן
ב-נ-ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מֵאָה־
a hundred מֵאָה
מ-א-ה shoresh
adjective · both · singular

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש-נ-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

הֲבַת־
(question) הֲ
daughter בַּת
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

שָׂרָה
Sarah שָׂרָה
proper name

וְאִם־
and וְ
whether, if, oh that אִם
conjunction

יִוָּלֵד
to give birth יִוָּלֵד
י־ל־ד shoresh
Nifal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

תֵּלֵד
to give birth תֵּלֵד
י־ל־ד shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd feminine singular

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

תִּשְׁעִים
ninety תִּשְׁעִים
adjective · both · plural

TRANSLATION

Avraham fell on his face and laughed [*rejoiced*]. He said in his heart: Can a hundred year old man have children? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old give birth?

IN PLAIN TERMS

Avraham falls on his face again, and this time laughs, and does the arithmetic in his heart: a hundred, and ninety. The Torah records the thought without judging it.

RASHI ON "Avraham fell on his face and laughed"

This one [the word וַיִּצְחָק] Onkelos translates, happiness and rejoicing, whereas [the word וַתִּצְחַק] concerning Sarah he interprets as laughter. You may learn [from this] that Avraham believed [the prophecy] and rejoiced but Sarah did not believe, and ridiculed. That is why God was angry with Sarah but was not angry with Avraham.

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PASUK 18 Bereishis 17:18 · 8 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים לוּ יִשְׁמָעֵאל יִחְיֶה לְפָנֶיךָ

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
א־מ־ר shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָהָם
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

אֶל־
near, toward, among אֶל
preposition

הָאֱלֹהִים
the הָ
gods in the ordinary sense אֱלֹהִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

לוּ
if, would that לוּ
conjunction

יִשְׁמָעֵאל
Yishmael יִשְׁמָעֵאל
proper name

יִחְיֶה
to live יִחְיֶה
ח־י־ה shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

לְפָנֶיךָ
to / for לְ
face, before פָּנֵי
your ךָ
פ־נ־ה shoresh
noun · both · plural · construct state

TRANSLATION

And Avraham said to [*before*] Elohim: May it be granted that Yishmael live before You.

IN PLAIN TERMS

His spoken answer is not about Sarah at all. It is a request for the son he already has: may Yishmael live before You.

RASHI ON "May it be granted that Yishmael live"

If only Yishmael might live. [Meaning:] "I am unworthy to receive such a reward."

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PASUK 19 Bereishis 17:19 · 20 words

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֲבָל שָׂרָה אִשְׁתְּךָ יֹלֶדֶת לְךָ בֵּן וְקָרָאתָ אֶת־שְׁמוֹ יִצְחָק וַהֲקִמֹתִי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתּוֹ לִבְרִית עוֹלָם לְזַרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו

וַיֹּאמֶר
and וַ
to say יֹאמֶר
shoresh א־מ־ר
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֱלֹהִים
gods in the ordinary sense אֱלֹהִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

אֲבָל
not, but אֲבָל
adverb

שָׂרָה
Sarah שָׂרָה
proper name

אִשְׁתְּךָ
woman אִשָּׁה
your ךָ
shoresh א־ש־ה
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

יֹלֶדֶת
to give birth יָלַד
shoresh י־ל־ד
Qal · participle · feminine singular

לְךָ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

בֵּן
son, builder בֵּן
shoresh ב־נ־ה
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וְקָרָאתָ
and וְ
to name קָרָאתָ
shoresh ק־ר־א
Qal · sequential perfect · 2nd masculine singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

שְׁמוֹ
name, honor שֵׁם
his/her/its וֹ
שֵׁם milah
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

יִצְחָק
Yitzchak יִצְחָק
proper name

וַהֲקִמֹתִי
and וַ
to rise הֲקִמֹתִי
ק-ו-מ shoresh
Hifil · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

בְּרִיתִי
to make a pact בְּרִית
my י
ב-ר-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אִתּוֹ
with, by, at, among אִת
his/her/its ו
preposition

לִבְרִית
to / for לְ
to make a pact בְּרִית
ב-ר-ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

עוֹלָם
eternity, always עוֹלָם
ע-ל-מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

לְזַרְעוֹ
to / for לְ
seed, plant, offspring זַרְע
his/her/its ו
ז-ר-ע shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַחֲרָיו
after אַחֲרֵי
his/her/its ו
preposition

TRANSLATION

Elohim said: Indeed, your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will name him Yitzchok. I will establish My covenant with him as an eternal covenant to his descendants after him.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The reply corrects him without dismissing him, Sarah will bear a son, and he is named Yitzchak, from the laughter of pasuk 17. The covenant will run through him.

RASHI ON **"Indeed"**

An expression of affirmation. Similarly: "Truly, we are sinners." [Or] "Truly, she has no son."

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PASUK 20 Bereishis 17:20 · 18 words

וּלְיִשְׁמָעֵאל שְׁמַעְתִּיךָ הִנֵּה בֵּרַכְתִּי אֹתוֹ וְהִפְרֵיתִי אֹתוֹ וְהִרְבֵּיתִי אֹתוֹ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד שְׁנֵים־עָשָׂר נְשִׂיאִם יוֹלִיד וּנְתַתִּיו לְגוֹי גָּדוֹל

וּלְיִשְׁמָעֵאל
and וּ
to / for לְ
Yishmael יִשְׁמָעֵאל
proper name

שְׁמַעְתִּיךָ
to hear attentively שָׁמַעְתִּי
your ךָ
ש־מ־ע shoresh
Qal · perfect · 1st common singular

הִנֵּה
look! הִנֵּה
demonstrative

בֵּרַכְתִּי
to bless בֵּרַכְתִּי
ב־ר־כ shoresh
Piel · perfect · 1st common singular

אֹתוֹ
to אֹת
his/her/its וֹ
direct object marker

וְהִפְרֵיתִי
and וְ
to bear fruit הִפְרַיתִי
פ־ר־ה shoresh
Hifil · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

אֹתוֹ
to אֹת
his/her/its וֹ
direct object marker

וְהִרְבֵּיתִי
and וְ
to increase הִרְבַּיתִי
ר־ב־ה shoresh
Hifil · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

אֹתוֹ
to אֹת
his/her/its וֹ
direct object marker

בִּמְאֹד
in / with / by בְּ
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

מְאֹד
very, greatly מְאֹד
adverb

שְׁנֵים־
two שְׁנַיִם
שְׁנַיִם milah
adjective · masculine · dual

עָשָׂר
ten, teens עָשָׂר
ע־ש־ר shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

וּנְתַתִּיו

and וּ

to give נְתַתִּי

his/her/its ו

נ-ת-נ shoresh

Qal · sequential perfect · 1st common singular

יוֹלִיד

to give birth יוֹלִיד

י-ל-ד shoresh

Hifil · imperfect · 3rd masculine singular

נְשִׂיאִם

leader, prince נְשִׂיאִם

נ-ש-א shoresh

noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

גָּדוֹל

great, large גָּדוֹל

ג-ד-ל shoresh

adjective · masculine · singular

לְגוֹי

to / for לְ

foreign nation גוֹי

ג-ו-י shoresh

noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

And as for Yishmael, I have heard you [*I have accepted your prayer*]. I have blessed him, and I will make him fruitful, and will increase him exceedingly. He will become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation.

IN PLAIN TERMS

And Yishmael is answered too. He is blessed, made fruitful, promised twelve princes and a great nation. Everything is given him except the covenant.

RASHI ON ”Twelve princes“

[A reference to the fact] they will dissipate like clouds, as in: “Clouds [נְשִׂיאִים] and wind.”

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PASUK 21 Bereishis 17:21 · 13 words

וְאֶת־בְּרִיתִי אָקִים אֶת־יִצְחָק אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵד לְךָ שָׂרָה לַמּוֹעֵד הַזֶּה בַּשָּׁנָה הָאַחֶרֶת

וְאֶת־
and וְ
to אֶת
direct object marker

בְּרִיתִי
to make a pact בְּרִית
my י
ב־ר־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

אָקִים
to rise אָקִים
ק־ו־מ shoresh
Hifil · imperfect · 1st common singular

אֶת־
with, by, at, among אֵת
preposition

יִצְחָק
Yitzchak יִצְחָק
proper name

אֲשֶׁר
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

תֵּלֵד
to give birth תֵּלֵד
י־ל־ד shoresh
Qal · imperfect · 3rd feminine singular

לְךָ
to / for לְ
your ךָ

שָׂרָה
Sarah שָׂרָה
proper name

לַמּוֹעֵד
to / for לַ
appointed time מוֹעֵד
י־ע־ד shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

הַזֶּה
the הַ
this or that זֶה
demonstrative pronoun

בַּשָּׁנָה
in / with / by בַּ
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

הָאַחֶרֶת
the הָ
next, other אַחֶרֶת
adjective · feminine · singular

TRANSLATION

But I will establish My covenant with Yitzchok, who Sarah will bear to you at this time next year.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The distinction is made explicit, and dated: this covenant, with Yitzchak, at this season next year.

PASUK 22 Bereishis 17:22 · 7 words

וַיְכַל לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ וַיַּעַל אֱלֹהִים מֵעַל אַבְרָהָם

וַיְכַל
and וַ
to finish, to come to an end יָכַל
כ־ל־ה shoresh
Piel · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

לְדַבֵּר
to / for לְ
to speak דִּבֵּר
ד־ב־ר shoresh
Piel · infinitive construct

אִתּוֹ
with, by, at, among אִת
his/her/its וֹ
preposition

וַיַּעַל
and וַ
to go up יַעַל
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֱלֹהִים
gods in the ordinary sense אֱלֹהִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

מֵעַל
from מֵ
above, over, upon עַל
preposition

אַבְרָהָם
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

TRANSLATION

And when He finished speaking with him, [*the Glory of*] Elohim ascended from Avraham.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The conversation ends the way it began, abruptly. God finished speaking and went up from Avraham.

RASHI ON **"From [above] Avraham"**

This is a more fitting expression when referring to the Divine Presence and we also learn that the righteous are the vehicles of God ['s Presence].

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PASUK 23 Bereishis 17:23 · 29 words

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם אֶת־יִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּנוֹ וְאֵת כָּל־יְלִידֵי בֵיתוֹ וְאֵת כָּל־מִקְנַת כַּסְפּוֹ כָּל־
זָכָר בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵית אַבְרָהָם וַיָּמָל אֶת־בְּשַׂר עָרְלָתָם בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר
אִתּוֹ אֱלֹהִים

וַיִּקַּח
and וַ
to take יִקַּח
ל־ק־ח shoresh
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָהָם
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

יִשְׁמָעֵאל
Yishmael יִשְׁמָעֵאל
proper name

בְּנוֹ
son, builder בֵּן
his/her/its וֹ
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וְאֵת
and וְ
to אֵת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

יְלִידֵי
born יְלִידֵי
י־ל־ד shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

בֵיתוֹ
house בֵּית
his/her/its וֹ
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

וְאֵת
and וְ
to אֵת
direct object marker

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מִקְנַת
a purchase, property מִקְנָה
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

כַּסְפּוֹ
silver, money כֶּסֶף
his/her/its וֹ
כ־ס־פ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

כָּל־
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

זָכָר
male, masculine זָכָר
ז־כ־ר shoresh
adjective · masculine · singular

בְּאַנְשֵׁי
in / with / by בְּ
man, male person אַנְשֵׁי
א־י־ש shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

בֵּית
house בֵּית
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַבְרָהָם
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

וַיִּמָּל
and וַ
to circumcise יָמָל
Qal · wayyiqtol · 3rd masculine singular

אֶת־
to אֶת
direct object marker

בְּשַׂר
flesh, body בְּשַׂר
ב־ש־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עָרְלָתָם
the prepuce עָרְלָת
their ם
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

בְּעֶצֶם
in / with / by בְּ
a bone עֶצֶם
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

הַיּוֹם
the הַ
day יוֹם
י־ו־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

הַזֶּה
the הַ
this or that זֶה
demonstrative pronoun

כַּאֲשֶׁר
like / as כַּ
אֲשֶׁר
who, which, what, that, when, where, how
relative particle

דִּבֶּר
to speak דִּבֶּר
ד־ב־ר shoresh
Piel · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

אִתּוֹ
with, by, at, among אִת
his/her/its וֹ
preposition

אֱלֹהִים
gods in the ordinary sense אֱלֹהִים
noun · masculine · plural · absolute state

TRANSLATION

Avraham took his son, Yishmael, and all those that were born in his household, and all that he had bought with his money, every male member of Avraham's household, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskin on that very day as Elohim had said to him.

IN PLAIN TERMS

No interval, no discussion. On that very day he circumcises Yishmael and every male of his household, the whole household, exactly as he was told in pesukim 12 and 13.

RASHI ON "Very day"

On the same day that he was commanded, by day and not by night. He was not afraid of the idolaters or of the scoffers. And so that his enemies and contemporaries not claim: "Had we seen him we would not have let him do the circumcision and fulfill God's precept."

Metsudah Rashi Chumash, 2009 · CC BY.

PASUK 24 Bereishis 17:24 · 8 words

וְאַבְרָהָם בֶּן־תִּשְׁעִים וְתֵשַׁע שָׁנָה בְּהִמֹּלוֹ בְּשַׂר עָרְלָתוֹ

וְאַבְרָהָם
and וְ
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

בֶּן־
son, builder בֶּן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

תִּשְׁעִים
ninety תִּשְׁעִים
adjective · both · plural

וְתֵשַׁע
and וְ
nine or ninth תֵשַׁע
adjective · feminine · singular

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

בְּהִמֹּלוֹ
in / with / by בְּ
to circumcise הִמֹּל
his/her/its וֹ
Nifal · infinitive construct

בְּשַׂר
flesh, body בְּשַׂר
ב־ש־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עָרְלָתוֹ

the prepuce עָרְלָת
his/her/its וֹ
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

Avraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

IN PLAIN TERMS

His own age at it, stated plainly: ninety-nine.

RASHI ON **"When he was circumcised"**

In the בְּהִפָּעֲלוֹ form the same [form] as בְּהִבָּרְאָם, "when they were created.

Metsudah Rashi Chumash, 2009 · CC BY.

PASUK 25 Bereishis 17:25 · 10 words

וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּנוֹ בֶּן־שְׁלֹשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה בְּהִמֹּלוֹ אֵת בְּשַׂר עָרְלָתוֹ

וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל
and וְ
Yishmael יִשְׁמָעֵאל
proper name

בְּנוֹ
son, builder בֵּן
his/her/its וֹ
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בֶּן־
son, builder בֵּן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

שְׁלֹשׁ
three שְׁלֹשׁ
שָׁלוֹשׁ milah
adjective · feminine · singular

עֶשְׂרֵה
ten, teens עֶשְׂרֵה
ע־ש־ר shoresh
adjective · feminine · singular

שָׁנָה
year שָׁנָה
ש־נ־ה shoresh
noun · feminine · singular · absolute state

בְּהִמֹּלוֹ
in / with / by בְּ
to circumcise הִמֹּל
his/her/its וֹ
Nifal · infinitive construct

אֵת
to אֵת
direct object marker

בְּשַׂר
flesh, body בָּשָׂר
ב־ש־ר shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

עָרְלָתוֹ
the prepuce עָרְלָה
his/her/its וֹ
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

And his son Yishmael was thirteen years old when he circumcised the flesh of his foreskin.

IN PLAIN TERMS

And Yishmael's: thirteen. The two ages are given separately, in their own pesukim.

RASHI ON **"When he circumcised the flesh of his foreskin"**

Concerning Avraham it does not state אֵת, because he only lacked cutting the flesh, for [the membrane] had already dissolved. But, Yishmael who was a lad required [actual] cutting the foreskin and tearing open the corona membrane. Therefore, concerning him אֵת is said.

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PASUK 26 Bereishis 17:26 · 7 words

בְּעֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה נִמּוֹל אַבְרָהָם וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל בְּנוֹ

בְּעֶצֶם
in / with / by בְּ
a bone עֶצֶם
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

הַיּוֹם
the הַ
day יוֹם
י־ו־מ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

הַזֶּה
the הַ
this or that זֶה
demonstrative pronoun

נִמּוֹל
to circumcise נִמּוֹל
Nifal · perfect · 3rd masculine singular

אַבְרָהָם
Avraham אַבְרָהָם
proper name

וְיִשְׁמָעֵאל
and וְ
Yishmael יִשְׁמָעֵאל
proper name

בְּנוֹ
son, builder בֵּן
his/her/its וֹ
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

TRANSLATION

On that very day Avraham and his son Yishmael were circumcised.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The pasuk says it once more, *on that very day*, putting father and son in the same clause.

RASHI ON **"On that very day"**

[On the day] that Avraham turned ninety-nine and Yishmael thirteen years, Avraham and his son Yishmael were circumcised.

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PASUK 27 Bereishis 17:27 · 12 words

וְכָל־אַנְשֵׁי בֵיתוֹ יְלִיד בָּיִת וּמִקְנַת־כֶּסֶף מֵאֵת בֶּן־נֵכָר נִמֹּלוּ אִתּוֹ {פ}

וְכָל־
and וְ
all, every כָּל
כ־ל־ל shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

אַנְשֵׁי
man, male person אַנְשֵׁי
א־י־ש shoresh
noun · masculine · plural · construct state

בֵיתוֹ
house בֵּית
his/her/its וֹ
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

יְלִיד
born יְלִיד
י־ל־ד shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

בָּיִת
house בָּיִת
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

וּמִקְנַת־
and וּ
a purchase, property מִקְנַת
noun · feminine · singular · construct state

בֶּן־
son, builder בֶּן
ב־נ־ה shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · construct state

מֵאֵת
from מֵ
with, by, at, among אֵת
preposition

כֶּסֶף
silver, money כֶּסֶף
כ־ס־פ shoresh
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

אִתּוֹ
with, by, at, among אִת
his/her/its וֹ
preposition

נִמֹּלוּ
to circumcise נִמֹּלוּ
Nifal · perfect · 3rd common plural

נֵכָר
foreign, a stranger נֵכָר
noun · masculine · singular · absolute state

TRANSLATION

All the men of his household, those born in his household, and bought with money from a stranger, were circumcised with him.

IN PLAIN TERMS

The parsha closes on the household: everyone born in it and everyone bought into it, circumcised with him. It ends where it began in 12:5, with the whole household moving together.

You have read the parsha

What that actually amounts to.

WHAT YOU NOW KNOW

- Parshas Lech Lecha runs from the call to Avram to the covenant of circumcision.
- Every one of its 1689 words has been taken apart in this part.
- You did it with the same handful of prefixes, endings and roots taught in Part Two.
- Nothing in the method was specific to this parsha. It is how every Chumash word works.

APPENDICES

Reference

The frequency tables the method rests on, a glossary, and the answers to the review questions.

APPENDIX A

The 200 commonest shorashim in the Chumash

Ranked by frequency, with counts from the whole Chumash.

These top 200 entries cover 31.31% of the Chumash. Roots aggregate every word derived from the same three letters. The letters are given in non-final form.

READ THIS COLUMN WITH CARE

The meaning column here is the gloss of the dictionary headword that each group is keyed to, and it is a rough label for the group, not a definition of any particular word. It can mislead: the group containing the word for a tent is keyed to a headword glossed “to become clear”. Always take a word's meaning from the word itself, which is what every breakdown in Part Three does.

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
1	**ב־נ־ה**	to construct buildings	2,083	1.68%	Gen.3.16
2	**כ־ל־ל**	to complete	1,608	1.30%	Gen.1.21
3	**א־מ־ר**	to say	1,417	1.14%	Gen.1.3
4	**ה־י־ה**	to be, become	1,049	0.85%	Gen.1.2
5	**ע־ש־ה**	to do or make	925	0.75%	Gen.1.7
6	**א־ר־צ**	the land	849	0.68%	Gen.1.1

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
7	**ד-ב-ר**	to speak	784	0.63%	Gen.8.15
8	**פ-נ-ה**	to turn, face	726	0.58%	Gen.1.2
9	**ע-מ-מ**	to gather together	697	0.56%	Gen.11.6
10	**י-ו-מ**	day	679	0.55%	Gen.1.5
11	**נ-ת-נ**	to give, put	649	0.52%	Gen.1.17
12	**ב-ו-א**	to bring, to come	640	0.52%	Gen.2.19
13	**א-י-ש**	a man, male person	571	0.46%	Gen.2.23
14	**ש-נ-ה**	to repeat, duplicate	441	0.36%	Gen.1.14
15	**ר-א-ה**	to see, observe	429	0.35%	Gen.1.4
16	**א-ב**	father, parent	417	0.34%	Gen.2.24
17	**ל-ק-ח**	to take	402	0.32%	Gen.2.15
18	**א-ח-ד**	to unite, collect	399	0.32%	Gen.1.5
19	**ק-ר-ב**	to bring near	397	0.32%	Gen.12.11
20	**י-ד**	hand	382	0.31%	Gen.3.22
21	**ע-ב-ד**	to work, serve	377	0.30%	Gen.9.25
22	**א-כ-ל**	to eat	362	0.29%	Gen.2.16
23	**י-צ-א**	to go out, come out	358	0.29%	Gen.1.12
24	**ק-ד-ש**	to declare holy	351	0.28%	Exod.3.5

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
25	**מ-ו-ת**	to die	332	0.27%	Gen.2.17
26	**ש-נ-י-מ**	two, double	329	0.27%	Gen.1.16
27	**כ-ה-נ**	to serve as priest	320	0.26%	Gen.14.18
28	**צ-ו-ה**	to command	316	0.25%	Gen.2.16
29	**ז-ב-ח**	to sacrifice an animal	311	0.25%	Gen.8.20
30	**א-ש-ה**	woman	307	0.25%	Gen.2.22
31	**ק-ו-מ**	to stand up	298	0.24%	Gen.4.8
32	**א-ח**	brother, sibling	291	0.23%	Gen.4.2
33	**י-ל-ד**	to give birth	287	0.23%	Gen.3.16
34	**ש-ב-ע**	to swear by repeating seven times	274	0.22%	Gen.4.24
35	**נ-ש-א**	to lift, carry	264	0.21%	Gen.4.13
36	**ש-מ**	name, honor, authority	253	0.20%	Gen.2.11
37	**ש-מ-ע**	to hear attentively	251	0.20%	Gen.3.8
38	**ע-י-נ**	eye, fountain	234	0.19%	Gen.3.5
39	**ח-ט-א**	to err, to sin	234	0.19%	Gen.4.7
40	**י-ש-ב**	to sit, dwell, remain	230	0.19%	Gen.4.16
41	**י-ל-כ**	to walk, carry	229	0.18%	Gen.3.14
42	**ש-ל-ח**	to send away, out	229	0.18%	Gen.3.22

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
43	**ח-י-ה**	to live, revive	223	0.18%	Gen.1.20
44	**א-ד-מ**	to turn red	222	0.18%	Gen.1.26
45	**ר-א-ש**	head, beginning	220	0.18%	Gen.2.10
46	**א-ה-ל**	to become clear	216	0.17%	Gen.4.20
47	**ק-ר-א**	to call out, name	214	0.17%	Gen.1.5
48	**מ-י-מ**	water	207	0.17%	Gen.1.2
49	**נ-פ-ש**	to breathe, refresh	207	0.17%	Gen.1.20
50	**ע-ב-ר**	to cross over	200	0.16%	Gen.8.1
51	**ט-מ-א**	to be unclean	200	0.16%	Gen.34.5
52	**נ-ט-ה**	to stretch out, bend away	196	0.16%	Gen.38.18
53	**מ-א-ה**	a hundred	194	0.16%	Gen.5.3
54	**ח-נ-ה**	to set up camp	191	0.15%	Gen.32.3
55	**ש-פ-ה**	to wear away	187	0.15%	Gen.8.19
56	**י-ד-ע**	to know, to understand	185	0.15%	Gen.3.5
57	**ב-ק-ר**	to inspect, care for	181	0.15%	Gen.12.16
58	**ש-ו-ב**	to turn back	181	0.15%	Gen.3.19
59	**ע-ש-ר**	to give a tenth	178	0.14%	Gen.6.3
60	**ע-ו-ר**	to wake someone up	177	0.14%	Gen.4.17

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
61	**י-ע-ד**	to set, appoint	173	0.14%	Gen.1.14
62	**ב-ר-כ**	to bless, to kneel	171	0.14%	Gen.1.22
63	**א-ל-פ**	to teach, to learn	171	0.14%	Gen.20.16
64	**ד-מ-מ**	to be silent, stop	168	0.14%	Gen.4.10
65	**ש-מ-ר**	to protect, guard	160	0.13%	Gen.2.15
66	**ח-מ-ש**	five	157	0.13%	Gen.5.6
67	**ש-מ-נ**	to make oily	157	0.13%	Gen.28.18
68	**ה-ר-ר**	mountain	153	0.12%	Gen.7.19
69	**ש-ו-מ**	to place	152	0.12%	Gen.2.8
70	**ז-ר-ע**	to plant seeds	149	0.12%	Gen.1.11
71	**כ-ל-ה**	to complete, prepare	149	0.12%	Gen.24.53
72	**ש-ל-ו-ש**	three	148	0.12%	Gen.5.22
73	**כ-ס-פ**	to become pale, fear	148	0.12%	Gen.13.2
74	**א-ד-ו-נ**	to control	146	0.12%	Gen.18.3
75	**פ-ק-ד**	to oversee, care for	144	0.12%	Gen.21.1
76	**ז-ה-ב**	gold, yellow	143	0.12%	Gen.2.11
77	**ש-כ-נ**	to live in	143	0.12%	Exod.25.9
78	**ל-ח-מ**	to eat, to battle	139	0.11%	Gen.3.19

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
79	**ב-ש-ר**	to announce good news	138	0.11%	Gen.2.21
80	**א-מ**	mother	138	0.11%	Gen.6.15
81	**ת-ו-כ**	center	135	0.11%	Gen.1.6
82	**נ-ח-ל**	to receive, to own	133	0.11%	Gen.31.14
83	**ג-ד-ל**	to make large	132	0.11%	Gen.1.16
84	**נ-ס-ע**	to start a journey	132	0.11%	Gen.11.2
85	**ע-מ-ד**	to stand	132	0.11%	Gen.18.8
86	**מ-ל-כ**	to rule, to reign	128	0.10%	Gen.14.1
87	**ז-כ-ר**	to remember, to mention, male	127	0.10%	Gen.1.27
88	**ר-ב-ע**	to be square	125	0.10%	Gen.2.10
89	**פ-א-ה**	to blow away	125	0.10%	Gen.4.11
90	**ט-ה-ר**	to be pure	124	0.10%	Gen.7.2
91	**א-ו-ל**	powerful, strong	124	0.10%	Gen.15.9
92	**י-ר-ש**	to take over by driving out	124	0.10%	Gen.15.3
93	**מ-צ-א**	to find, to appear	122	0.10%	Gen.2.20
94	**ד-ר-כ**	to walk, tread	122	0.10%	Gen.3.24
95	**נ-ג-ע**	to touch, strike, reach	121	0.10%	Gen.12.17
96	**ר-ע-ע**	to make bad	120	0.10%	Gen.2.9

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
97	**ש-ד-ה**	open space	118	0.10%	Gen.2.5
98	**כ-פ-ר**	to cover, to forgive	118	0.10%	Gen.6.14
99	**צ-א-ן**	flock of sheep or goats	116	0.09%	Gen.4.2
100	**ש-ל-מ**	to make complete, to offer peace sacrifices	116	0.09%	Exod.20.24
101	**ג-ו-ר**	to stay as a guest	114	0.09%	Gen.15.13
102	**ש-פ-ט**	to judge, sentence	114	0.09%	Gen.18.19
103	**ב-ג-ד**	to hide, to trick	114	0.09%	Gen.24.53
104	**מ-ל-א**	to fill or become full	113	0.09%	Gen.1.22
105	**מ-נ-ח-ה**	to offer, to bring as a gift	113	0.09%	Gen.4.3
106	**ע-ד-ה**	a group, assembly	110	0.09%	Exod.12.3
107	**ע-צ-ה**	to close, to shut	109	0.09%	Gen.1.11
108	**ע-ש-ר**	ten, tenth	109	0.09%	Gen.5.8
109	**ק-נ-ה**	to buy, to own	107	0.09%	Gen.4.20
110	**נ-כ-ה**	to strike	107	0.09%	Gen.4.15
111	**פ-ת-ח**	to open, begin	106	0.09%	Gen.4.7
112	**פ-ר-ר**	to violate, frustrate	106	0.09%	Gen.32.16
113	**א-ש**	fire	105	0.08%	Gen.15.17
114	**מ-ל-א-כ**	messenger	104	0.08%	Gen.2.2

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
115	**ב-ד-ד**	to be alone	104	0.08%	Gen.2.18
116	**ב-ה-מ-ה**	large animal	103	0.08%	Gen.1.24
117	**ק-ו-ל**	voice, sound	102	0.08%	Gen.3.8
118	**ש-מ-י-מ**	the sky above	100	0.08%	Gen.1.1
119	**ע-ר-ב**	to become dusky	99	0.08%	Gen.1.5
120	**ש-ב-ע-י-מ**	seventy days	99	0.08%	Gen.2.2
121	**ט-ו-ב**	to make good	98	0.08%	Gen.1.4
122	**צ-ב-א**	to gather an army	96	0.08%	Gen.2.1
123	**ח-ד-ש**	to renew, rebuild	94	0.08%	Gen.7.11
124	**ל-ו-ה**	to unite, to remain	94	0.08%	Exod.4.14
125	**ק-ט-ר**	to produce fragrance by burning	93	0.07%	Exod.25.6
126	**י-ר-א**	to fear, reverence	92	0.07%	Gen.3.10
127	**ס-פ-ר**	to count, record numbers	92	0.07%	Gen.34.30
128	**ע-ו-ר**	to expose	91	0.07%	Gen.3.21
129	**ג-ו-י**	foreign nation, Gentile	91	0.07%	Gen.10.5
130	**ר-ו-מ**	to raise, rise	90	0.07%	Gen.7.17
131	**א-ב-נ**	stone	89	0.07%	Gen.2.12
132	**ש-כ-ב**	to lie down	89	0.07%	Gen.19.4

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
133	**ס-ב-ב**	to surround, border	88	0.07%	Gen.23.17
134	**ב-כ-ר**	to give the firstborn rights	88	0.07%	Gen.10.15
135	**י-ר-ד**	to go down	88	0.07%	Gen.11.5
136	**י-מ**	large body of water	87	0.07%	Gen.1.10
137	**ח-ל-ב**	rich part	87	0.07%	Gen.4.4
138	**כ-ב-ש**	ram, lamb	87	0.07%	Exod.12.5
139	**ר-ו-ח**	to smell, perceive	86	0.07%	Gen.8.21
140	**ר-ב-ב**	to increase in number	86	0.07%	Gen.6.5
141	**ה-ל-כ**	to walk	84	0.07%	Gen.2.14
142	**ר-ע-ה**	to tend sheep	84	0.07%	Gen.11.3
143	**ע-ל-מ**	to conceal	83	0.07%	Gen.3.22
144	**ש-ש**	six, ordinal sixth	82	0.07%	Gen.7.6
145	**ב-ר-ה**	to make clear	82	0.07%	Gen.6.18
146	**ש-ק-ל**	to weigh, to balance	82	0.07%	Gen.23.15
147	**כ-ב-ד**	to be heavy, burdensome	80	0.06%	Gen.31.1
148	**ר-ב-ה**	to increase	78	0.06%	Gen.1.22
149	**ש-ב-ת**	to stop working	77	0.06%	Exod.16.23
150	**ל-ו-ל**	spiral staircase	76	0.06%	Gen.1.5

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
151	**ח-ל-ל**	to pierce, begin with opening	76	0.06%	Gen.4.26
152	**ש-ע-ר**	to storm, fear	76	0.06%	Gen.27.11
153	**כ-ס-ה**	to cover, to conceal	74	0.06%	Gen.7.19
154	**י-ר-ה**	to teach, to throw	74	0.06%	Gen.26.5
155	**נ-ג-ד**	to announce, to expose	72	0.06%	Gen.3.11
156	**ח-מ-ש-י-מ**	fifty	72	0.06%	Gen.6.15
157	**ר-ג-ל**	to walk, to travel	71	0.06%	Gen.8.9
158	**כ-ר-ת**	to cut, divide, make a covenant	71	0.06%	Gen.9.11
159	**ז-ק-נ**	to grow old	70	0.06%	Gen.18.11
160	**ת-מ-מ**	to make whole	69	0.06%	Gen.6.9
161	**ש-ל-ו-ש-י-מ**	thirty	68	0.05%	Gen.5.3
162	**ל-ב**	heart, feelings	67	0.05%	Gen.6.5
163	**ע-ז-ז**	to be strong	66	0.05%	Gen.15.9
164	**י-כ-ל**	to be able	64	0.05%	Gen.13.6
165	**ח-ו-צ**	outside, outdoors	63	0.05%	Gen.6.14
166	**א-ש-ה**	fire offering	63	0.05%	Exod.29.18
167	**י-מ-נ**	to favor the right side	62	0.05%	Gen.13.9
168	**פ-ר-ה**	to produce fruit	61	0.05%	Gen.1.11

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
169	**נ-פ-ל**	to fall	61	0.05%	Gen.2.21
170	**א-ר-ב-ע-י-מ**	forty days	61	0.05%	Gen.5.13
171	**ד-ו-ר**	to remain	61	0.05%	Gen.6.9
172	**ג-ב-ל**	to mark boundaries	59	0.05%	Gen.10.19
173	**ש-ר-ר**	to have power	59	0.05%	Gen.12.15
174	**ח-ל-מ**	to make plump, dream	59	0.05%	Gen.20.3
175	**י-ת-ר**	to exceed, remain	59	0.05%	Gen.30.36
176	**מ-ש-ח**	to rub with oil, to anoint	59	0.05%	Gen.31.13
177	**י-ס-פ**	to continue adding	58	0.05%	Gen.4.2
178	**כ-פ-פ**	to curve	58	0.05%	Gen.8.9
179	**א-נ-פ**	to get angry	57	0.05%	Gen.2.7
180	**א-י-ב**	to hate, be hostile	57	0.05%	Gen.22.17
181	**ס-ו-ר**	to turn away	57	0.05%	Gen.8.13
182	**ש-ע-ר**	to guard, estimate	57	0.05%	Gen.19.1
183	**ח-ז-ק**	to grasp, to fortify	56	0.05%	Gen.19.16
184	**ח-ק-ה**	enactment, rule	56	0.05%	Gen.26.5
185	**ע-נ-ן**	to practice magic	55	0.04%	Gen.9.13
186	**ש-ת-ה**	to drink	55	0.04%	Gen.9.21

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
187	**ל-ב-ב**	to give, to make	55	0.04%	Gen.20.5
188	**נ-ס-כ**	to pour, to anoint	55	0.04%	Gen.35.14
189	**נ-ו-ח**	to rest, settle	54	0.04%	Gen.8.21
190	**א-ס-פ**	to collect, take together	53	0.04%	Gen.6.21
191	**ח-מ-ר**	to smear with clay	53	0.04%	Gen.12.16
192	**ש-ו-ר**	to travel about	53	0.04%	Gen.32.6
193	**ח-צ-ה**	to cut in half	52	0.04%	Exod.12.29
194	**נ-ו-פ**	to wave	52	0.04%	Exod.29.24
195	**ק-ה-ל**	to gather together	51	0.04%	Gen.28.3
196	**ק-ב-ר**	to bury	50	0.04%	Gen.15.15
197	**א-ח-ז**	to grab, hold	50	0.04%	Gen.17.8
198	**ח-ק-ק**	to make laws	50	0.04%	Gen.47.22
199	**ק-ר-ש**	slab plank deck	50	0.04%	Exod.26.15
200	**ל-ב-נ**	to make white, to brick	49	0.04%	Gen.30.35

APPENDIX B

The 200 commonest content words

Counted as dictionary headwords: each row covers every inflection of one word.

These top 200 entries cover 27.73% of the Chumash. Divine names and proper names are excluded.

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
1	**כֹּל**	all, every	1,595	1.29%	Gen.1.21
2	**בֵּן**	son, builder	1,496	1.21%	Gen.3.16
3	**אָמַר**	to say	1,373	1.11%	Gen.1.3
4	**הָיָה**	to be	1,049	0.85%	Gen.1.2
5	**עָשָׂה**	to make	860	0.69%	Gen.1.7
6	**אֶרֶץ**	the earth	849	0.68%	Gen.1.1
7	**יוֹם**	day	668	0.54%	Gen.1.5
8	**נָתַן**	to give	647	0.52%	Gen.1.17
9	**פָּנִים**	face, before	627	0.51%	Gen.1.2
10	**בּוֹא**	to bring to, give	618	0.50%	Gen.2.19
11	**אִישׁ**	man, male person	570	0.46%	Gen.2.23
12	**עַם**	people, tribe, troops	445	0.36%	Gen.11.6

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
13	**דַּבֵּר**	to speak	415	0.33%	Gen.8.15
14	**אָב**	father, parent	413	0.33%	Gen.2.24
15	**אֶחָד**	one, first	399	0.32%	Gen.1.5
16	**רָאָה**	to see	396	0.32%	Gen.1.4
17	**לָקַח**	to take	393	0.32%	Gen.2.15
18	**יָד**	hand	382	0.31%	Gen.3.22
19	**שָׁנָה**	year	371	0.30%	Gen.1.14
20	**יָצָא**	to go out, bring out	347	0.28%	Gen.1.12
21	**שְׁנַיִם**	two	329	0.27%	Gen.1.16
22	**אָכַל**	to eat	328	0.26%	Gen.2.16
23	**בַּיִת**	house	324	0.26%	Gen.6.14
24	**אִשָּׁה**	woman	307	0.25%	Gen.2.22
25	**מוּת**	to die	303	0.24%	Gen.2.17
26	**כֹּהֵן**	priest, official	295	0.24%	Gen.14.18
27	**אָח**	brother, sibling	285	0.23%	Gen.4.2
28	**דָּבָר**	word, matter, thing	256	0.21%	Gen.11.1
29	**שֵׁם**	name, honor	252	0.20%	Gen.2.11
30	**צָוָה**	to order, command	252	0.20%	Gen.2.16

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
31	**שָׁמַע**	to hear attentively	240	0.19%	Gen.3.8
32	**עַיִן**	eye	231	0.19%	Gen.3.5
33	**יָלַךְ**	to walk, carry	229	0.18%	Gen.3.14
34	**קֹדֶשׁ**	sacred place	221	0.18%	Exod.3.5
35	**אֹהֶל**	tent	214	0.17%	Gen.4.20
36	**מַיִם**	water	207	0.17%	Gen.1.2
37	**נֶפֶשׁ**	living creature	205	0.17%	Gen.1.20
38	**יָלַד**	to give birth	205	0.17%	Gen.3.16
39	**בַּת**	daughter	204	0.16%	Gen.5.4
40	**עָלָה**	to go up	201	0.16%	Gen.2.6
41	**שָׁלַח**	to send away	201	0.16%	Gen.3.22
42	**יָשַׁב**	to sit, dwell, remain	199	0.16%	Gen.4.16
43	**מִזְבֵּחַ**	altar	198	0.16%	Gen.8.20
44	**קָרַב**	to bring near	198	0.16%	Gen.12.11
45	**מֵאָה**	a hundred	194	0.16%	Gen.5.3
46	**קָרָא**	to name	192	0.15%	Gen.1.5
47	**שֶׁבַע**	seven, week	185	0.15%	Gen.4.24
48	**מִשְׁפָּחָה**	family, tribe	185	0.15%	Gen.8.19

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
49	**שׁוּב**	to turn back	180	0.15%	Gen.3.19
50	**עֶבֶד**	servant	180	0.15%	Gen.9.25
51	**יָדַע**	to know	174	0.14%	Gen.3.5
52	**עִיר**	city	173	0.14%	Gen.4.17
53	**נָשָׂא**	to lift, carry	168	0.14%	Gen.4.13
54	**דָּם**	blood, juice, shed blood	166	0.13%	Gen.4.10
55	**מוֹעֵד**	appointed time	160	0.13%	Gen.1.14
56	**שׂוּם**	to put	151	0.12%	Gen.2.8
57	**הַר**	mountain range	150	0.12%	Gen.7.19
58	**שָׁמַר**	to protect, guard	148	0.12%	Gen.2.15
59	**עָלָה**	to offer as a sacrifice	148	0.12%	Gen.8.20
60	**כֶּסֶף**	silver, money	146	0.12%	Gen.13.2
61	**קוּם**	to rise	145	0.12%	Gen.4.8
62	**רֹאשׁ**	head	144	0.12%	Gen.2.10
63	**זָהָב**	gold, yellow	143	0.12%	Gen.2.11
64	**חַטָּאָה**	offense, sin	142	0.11%	Gen.4.7
65	**מַטֶּה**	branch, rod, staff	142	0.11%	Gen.38.18
66	**חָמֵשׁ**	five years	139	0.11%	Gen.5.6

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
67	**בָּשָׂר**	flesh, body	138	0.11%	Gen.2.21
68	**בָּרַךְ**	to bless	137	0.11%	Gen.1.22
69	**חַי**	alive, living	136	0.11%	Gen.1.20
70	**פָּקַד**	to oversee, care for	135	0.11%	Gen.21.1
71	**תָּוֶךְ**	center	133	0.11%	Gen.1.6
72	**מָקוֹם**	place	133	0.11%	Gen.1.9
73	**עָבַר**	to cross over	130	0.10%	Gen.8.1
74	**פֶּה**	mouth, speech	124	0.10%	Gen.4.11
75	**אֶלֶף**	a thousand	123	0.10%	Gen.20.16
76	**מָצָא**	to find, to get	122	0.10%	Gen.2.20
77	**נָסַע**	to start a journey	120	0.10%	Gen.11.2
78	**שָׂדֶה**	open space	117	0.09%	Gen.2.5
79	**אַיִל**	ram	117	0.09%	Gen.15.9
80	**דֶּרֶךְ**	a path or way	116	0.09%	Gen.3.24
81	**צֹאן**	flock of sheep or goats	116	0.09%	Gen.4.2
82	**שָׁלוֹשׁ**	three	115	0.09%	Gen.5.22
83	**טָמֵא**	to be contaminated	114	0.09%	Gen.34.5
84	**עָבַד**	to work, serve	113	0.09%	Gen.2.5

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
85	**מִנְחָה**	to bring as an offering	113	0.09%	Gen.4.3
86	**בֶּגֶד**	clothing, disguise	113	0.09%	Gen.24.53
87	**זֶרַע**	seed, plant, offspring	112	0.09%	Gen.1.11
88	**עֵדָה**	a group, congregation	110	0.09%	Exod.12.3
89	**עֵץ**	tree, wood	108	0.09%	Gen.1.11
90	**אָדָם**	human being	107	0.09%	Gen.1.26
91	**שֶׁמֶן**	oil	106	0.09%	Gen.28.18
92	**מִדְבָּר**	open field, desert	105	0.08%	Gen.14.6
93	**אֵשׁ**	fire	104	0.08%	Gen.15.17
94	**מַחֲנֶה**	camp, army	104	0.08%	Gen.32.3
95	**מִשְׁכָּן**	dwelling place	104	0.08%	Exod.25.9
96	**בְּהֵמָה**	large animal	103	0.08%	Gen.1.24
97	**גָּדוֹל**	great, large	102	0.08%	Gen.1.16
98	**קוֹל**	voice, sound	102	0.08%	Gen.3.8
99	**מֶלֶךְ**	king	101	0.08%	Gen.14.1
100	**יָרַשׁ**	to take possession of	101	0.08%	Gen.15.3
101	**שָׁמַיִם**	sky, heavens	100	0.08%	Gen.1.1
102	**נָכָה**	to strike	99	0.08%	Gen.4.15

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
103	**קֶרֶב**	near, among	99	0.08%	Gen.18.12
104	**כְּלִי**	utensil, vessel	99	0.08%	Gen.24.53
105	**אַרְבַּע**	four	98	0.08%	Gen.2.10
106	**בָּקָר**	cattle herd	98	0.08%	Gen.12.16
107	**אֲדָמָה**	soil, earth	96	0.08%	Gen.1.25
108	**רַע**	bad or evil	96	0.08%	Gen.2.9
109	**עָשָׂר**	ten, teens	92	0.07%	Gen.5.8
110	**פַּר**	bull, ox	92	0.07%	Gen.32.16
111	**גּוֹי**	foreign nation	91	0.07%	Gen.10.5
112	**אָדוֹן**	to control	91	0.07%	Gen.18.3
113	**צָבָא**	army, force	90	0.07%	Gen.2.1
114	**בַּד**	by itself	90	0.07%	Gen.2.18
115	**אֶבֶן**	stone	88	0.07%	Gen.2.12
116	**יָרַד**	to go down	88	0.07%	Gen.11.5
117	**יָם**	large body of water	87	0.07%	Gen.1.10
118	**כֶּבֶשׂ**	ram, male sheep	87	0.07%	Exod.12.5
119	**טוֹב**	good, well	86	0.07%	Gen.1.4
120	**חֹדֶשׁ**	new moon month	86	0.07%	Gen.7.11

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
121	**חָנָה**	to pitch camp	86	0.07%	Gen.26.17
122	**לֵוִי**	descendant of Levi	86	0.07%	Exod.4.14
123	**הָלַךְ**	to walk	84	0.07%	Gen.2.14
124	**לֶחֶם**	food, especially bread	84	0.07%	Gen.3.19
125	**עָמַד**	to stand	84	0.07%	Gen.18.8
126	**חָיָה**	to live	83	0.07%	Gen.5.3
127	**מִשְׁפָּט**	to judge, decide	83	0.07%	Gen.18.19
128	**עֲבֹדָה**	to work	83	0.07%	Gen.29.27
129	**בְּרִית**	to make a pact	82	0.07%	Gen.6.18
130	**יָרֵא**	to fear, reverence	81	0.07%	Gen.3.10
131	**בֹּקֶר**	morning dawn	80	0.06%	Gen.1.5
132	**עוֹר**	skin, hide	80	0.06%	Gen.3.21
133	**כָּפַר**	to cover, forgive	79	0.06%	Gen.6.14
134	**קָרְבָּן**	sacrificial offering	78	0.06%	Lev.1.2
135	**עֶרֶב**	dusk, evening	77	0.06%	Gen.1.5
136	**קָדַשׁ**	to set apart as holy	75	0.06%	Gen.2.3
137	**פֶּתַח**	door, entrance	75	0.06%	Gen.4.7
138	**נַחֲלָה**	inheritance	74	0.06%	Gen.31.14

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
139	**עוֹלָם**	eternity, always	73	0.06%	Gen.3.22
140	**עֶשְׂרִים**	twenty	73	0.06%	Gen.6.3
141	**אַמָּה**	unit of length	73	0.06%	Gen.6.15
142	**שֵׁשׁ**	six	73	0.06%	Gen.7.6
143	**סָבִיב**	around, surrounding	73	0.06%	Gen.23.17
144	**חֲמִשִּׁים**	fifty	72	0.06%	Gen.6.15
145	**חָטָא**	to miss, sin	72	0.06%	Gen.20.6
146	**זָבַח**	to offer as a sacrifice	72	0.06%	Gen.31.54
147	**נָשִׂיא**	leader, prince	71	0.06%	Gen.17.20
148	**שָׁבַע**	to swear	70	0.06%	Gen.21.23
149	**טָהוֹר**	to be clean	69	0.06%	Gen.7.2
150	**כָּרַת**	to make a covenant	69	0.06%	Gen.9.11
151	**בְּכוֹר**	firstborn, chief	69	0.06%	Gen.10.15
152	**שְׁלוֹשִׁים**	thirty years	68	0.05%	Gen.5.3
153	**גֵּר**	foreigner, guest	68	0.05%	Gen.15.13
154	**לֵב**	heart, feelings	67	0.05%	Gen.6.5
155	**נָגַע**	to inflict, to strike	67	0.05%	Gen.12.17
156	**רָבָה**	to increase	66	0.05%	Gen.1.22

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
157	**רַב**	abundant, great	66	0.05%	Gen.6.5
158	**טָמֵא**	unclean	66	0.05%	Lev.5.2
159	**מְלָאכָה**	work	65	0.05%	Gen.2.2
160	**חֵלֶב**	choice part	65	0.05%	Gen.4.4
161	**מַעֲשֶׂה**	action, transaction	65	0.05%	Gen.5.29
162	**יָכֹל**	to be able	64	0.05%	Gen.13.6
163	**לַיִל**	night	63	0.05%	Gen.1.5
164	**אֵם**	mother	63	0.05%	Gen.2.24
165	**חוּץ**	outside, outdoors	63	0.05%	Gen.6.14
166	**שֶׁקֶל**	weight standard	63	0.05%	Gen.23.15
167	**מִצְוָה**	command	63	0.05%	Gen.26.5
168	**אִשֶּׁה**	sacrifice	63	0.05%	Exod.29.18
169	**שֵׁנִי**	second, again	62	0.05%	Gen.1.8
170	**אַרְבָּעִים**	forty days	61	0.05%	Gen.5.13
171	**דּוֹר**	generation, age	61	0.05%	Gen.6.9
172	**שָׁכַב**	to lie down	61	0.05%	Gen.19.4
173	**רֶגֶל**	foot, step	60	0.05%	Gen.8.9
174	**נָפַל**	to fall	58	0.05%	Gen.2.21

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
175	**יָסַף**	to continue adding	58	0.05%	Gen.4.2
176	**כַּף**	hand, palm	58	0.05%	Gen.8.9
177	**מָלֵא**	to fill up	57	0.05%	Gen.1.22
178	**שְׁבִיעִי**	seventh day	57	0.05%	Gen.2.2
179	**שַׂר**	head person	57	0.05%	Gen.12.15
180	**זָכָר**	male, masculine	56	0.05%	Gen.1.27
181	**עֵז**	goat	56	0.05%	Gen.15.9
182	**שַׁעַר**	door, gate	56	0.05%	Gen.19.1
183	**חֻקָּה**	rule, command, regulation	56	0.05%	Gen.26.5
184	**תּוֹרָה**	law	56	0.05%	Gen.26.5
185	**נָגַד**	to announce, expose	55	0.04%	Gen.3.11
186	**רִאשׁוֹן**	first, foremost	55	0.04%	Gen.8.13
187	**סוּר**	to turn away	55	0.04%	Gen.8.13
188	**לֵבָב**	heart	55	0.04%	Gen.20.5
189	**אָדָן**	column base	55	0.04%	Exod.26.19
190	**נָגַע**	to touch, strike	54	0.04%	Gen.3.3
191	**זָקֵן**	old person	54	0.04%	Gen.18.11
192	**טָהֵר**	to make pure	54	0.04%	Gen.35.2

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
193	**שָׁלֶם**	to offer as a peace offering	54	0.04%	Exod.20.24
194	**אַחֵר**	next, other	53	0.04%	Gen.4.25
195	**גְּבוּל**	boundary, territory	53	0.04%	Gen.10.19
196	**אֹיֵב**	enemy	53	0.04%	Gen.22.17
197	**רֵעַ**	friend	52	0.04%	Gen.11.3
198	**שׁוֹר**	cattle traveler	52	0.04%	Gen.32.6
199	**אַף**	face, anger	51	0.04%	Gen.2.7
200	**מִקְנֶה**	property, livestock	51	0.04%	Gen.4.20

APPENDIX C

The 118 commonest particles and function words

Prefixes, prepositions, conjunctions and standalone pronouns, and the single most valuable list in this book.

These top 118 entries cover 41.75% of the Chumash. Pronominal endings are not standalone words and are excluded.

If you learn one table in this book, learn the first thirty rows of this one. Between them the six prefixes at the top account for over a quarter of every word in the Chumash.

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
1	**וְ**	and	13,768	11.09%	Gen.1.1
2	**הַ**	the (definite article)	7,450	6.00%	Gen.1.1
3	**לְ**	to, for	5,773	4.65%	Gen.1.5
4	**אֵת**	to specifically indicate	4,153	3.35%	Gen.1.1
5	**בְּ**	in, with, by	3,882	3.13%	Gen.1.1
6	**אֲשֶׁר**	who, which, what, that, when, where, how	1,908	1.54%	Gen.1.7
7	**אֵל**	near, toward, among	1,682	1.36%	Gen.1.9
8	**מִ**	from	1,625	1.31%	Gen.1.7
9	**עַל**	above, over, upon	1,529	1.23%	Gen.1.2
10	**לֹא**	not, no	1,344	1.08%	Gen.2.5

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
11	**כִּי**	because, since	1,040	0.84%	Gen.1.4
12	**הוּא**	he, it, self, this, that	644	0.52%	Gen.2.11
13	**כְּ**	like, as	571	0.46%	Gen.1.26
14	**מִן**	from, out of	393	0.32%	Gen.2.6
15	**זֶה**	this or that	337	0.27%	Gen.5.1
16	**אִם**	whether, if, oh that	327	0.26%	Gen.4.7
17	**עַד**	to, until, during	307	0.25%	Gen.3.19
18	**אֵת**	with, by, at, among	296	0.24%	Gen.4.1
19	**אַתָּה**	you	265	0.21%	Gen.3.11
20	**אֵלֶּה**	these or those	264	0.21%	Gen.2.4
21	**שָׁם**	then, there	259	0.21%	Gen.2.8
22	**אוֹ**	or, if	256	0.21%	Gen.24.49
23	**עִם**	with, along with	243	0.20%	Gen.3.6
24	**הִנֵּה**	look!	213	0.17%	Gen.1.29
25	**אַחַר**	after	198	0.16%	Gen.5.4
26	**כֵּן**	rightly so	182	0.15%	Gen.1.7
27	**אֲנִי**	I am	181	0.15%	Gen.6.17
28	**זֹאת**	this one	179	0.14%	Gen.2.23

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
29	**גַּם**	even, also, too	177	0.14%	Gen.3.6
30	**בֵּין**	between, either...or	165	0.13%	Gen.1.4
31	**אָנֹכִי**	I am	141	0.11%	Gen.3.10
32	**תַּחַת**	below, underneath	137	0.11%	Gen.1.7
33	**מָה**	what, how, why, whatever	132	0.11%	Gen.2.19
34	**אַיִן**	nothing	129	0.10%	Gen.2.5
35	**הֵם**	they emphasize	120	0.10%	Gen.3.7
36	**נָא**	now please	109	0.09%	Gen.12.11
37	**אַל**	not, nothing	104	0.08%	Gen.13.8
38	**הֲ**	interrogative ('is it?')	96	0.08%	Gen.3.11
39	**עוֹד**	again, repeatedly, still	95	0.08%	Gen.4.25
40	**עַתָּה**	at this time	84	0.07%	Gen.3.22
41	**מַעַן**	on account of	78	0.06%	Gen.12.13
42	**מְאֹד**	very, greatly	75	0.06%	Gen.1.31
43	**פֶּן**	lest, in case	62	0.05%	Gen.3.3
44	**מַעַל**	upward, above	60	0.05%	Gen.6.16
45	**מִי**	whoever	55	0.04%	Gen.3.11
46	**הֵן**	lo! if	45	0.04%	Gen.3.22

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
47	**אַךְ**	only, just	43	0.03%	Gen.7.23
48	**כֹּה**	thus, here, now	42	0.03%	Gen.15.5
49	**רַק**	merely, only	40	0.03%	Gen.6.5
50	**בִּלְתִּי**	not, except, without	30	0.02%	Gen.3.11
51	**יֵשׁ**	exists	30	0.02%	Gen.18.24
52	**אֲנַחְנוּ**	we	28	0.02%	Gen.13.8
53	**כְּמוֹ**	like, as	28	0.02%	Gen.19.15
54	**אַף**	also, or, though	22	0.02%	Gen.3.1
55	**אָז**	at that time then	21	0.02%	Gen.4.26
56	**בְּעַד**	at, beside, among, behind, for	20	0.02%	Gen.7.16
57	**עִמָּד**	along with	19	0.02%	Gen.3.12
58	**מוּל**	opposite, facing	19	0.02%	Exod.18.19
59	**אוּלַי**	if not, maybe	18	0.01%	Gen.16.2
60	**טֶרֶם**	not yet	17	0.01%	Gen.2.5
61	**נֶגֶד**	opposite, before	17	0.01%	Gen.2.18
62	**הֵנָּה**	themselves, for is	17	0.01%	Gen.6.2
63	**יַחַד**	together	17	0.01%	Gen.13.6
64	**אָמֵן**	to confirm, truly	14	0.01%	Num.5.22

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
65	**תְּמוֹל**	a day ago	12	0.01%	Gen.31.2
66	**פֹּה**	here, hence	11	0.01%	Gen.19.12
67	**אֵיךְ**	how? where?	11	0.01%	Gen.26.9
68	**שִׁלְשׁוֹם**	day before yesterday	11	0.01%	Gen.31.2
69	**מַדּוּעַ**	why	10	0.01%	Gen.26.27
70	**אֵצֶל**	near, beside	10	0.01%	Gen.39.10
71	**יוֹמָם**	daily	10	0.01%	Exod.13.21
72	**הֵנָּה**	to this side or that side	9	0.01%	Gen.15.16
73	**לוּא**	if, would that	9	0.01%	Gen.17.18
74	**כָּכָה**	just like that	9	0.01%	Exod.12.11
75	**מַטָּה**	downward, below	9	0.01%	Exod.26.24
76	**אֵל**	these or those	8	0.01%	Gen.19.8
77	**אָן**	where, when, hither, thither	7	0.01%	Gen.16.8
78	**הֵן**	they are emphasized	7	0.01%	Gen.19.29
79	**הָלְאָה**	far away, so far	6	0.00%	Gen.19.9
80	**יַעַן**	for, because of	6	0.00%	Gen.22.16
81	**רֵיקָם**	in vain	6	0.00%	Gen.31.42
82	**אַיֵּה**	where	5	0.00%	Gen.18.9

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
83	**נֹכַח**	in front of, opposite	5	0.00%	Gen.25.21
84	**מָתַי**	when	5	0.00%	Gen.30.30
85	**בִּי**	if I may	5	0.00%	Gen.43.20
86	**אַי**	where? thus how?	4	0.00%	Gen.3.9
87	**בִּלְעֲדֵי**	except, without	4	0.00%	Gen.14.24
88	**חָלִילָה**	to forbid	4	0.00%	Gen.18.25
89	**אֵפוֹ**	then, now	4	0.00%	Gen.27.33
90	**אוּלָם**	however or contrarily	4	0.00%	Gen.28.19
91	**חִנָּם**	free of charge	4	0.00%	Gen.29.15
92	**נַחְנוּ**	we	4	0.00%	Gen.42.11
93	**אָמֶשׁ**	yesterday	3	0.00%	Gen.19.34
94	**אַיִן**	where from	3	0.00%	Gen.29.4
95	**לוּלֵא**	if not	3	0.00%	Gen.31.42
96	**עַד**	until, to, for	3	0.00%	Exod.15.18
97	**אֲחֹרַנִּית**	backwards	2	0.00%	Gen.9.23
98	**הֵלֹם**	here to	2	0.00%	Gen.16.13
99	**אֲבָל**	not, but	2	0.00%	Gen.17.19
100	**אֻמְנָם**	truly	2	0.00%	Gen.18.13

#	HEBREW	MEANING	COUNT	% OF CHUMASH	FIRST SEEN
101	**הַלָּזֶה**	this one	2	0.00%	Gen.24.65
102	**אָכֵן**	firmly, surely, but	2	0.00%	Gen.28.16
103	**אָטָד**	buckthorn tree	2	0.00%	Gen.50.10
104	**אָנָא**	now then	2	0.00%	Gen.50.17
105	**זוּ**	this or that	2	0.00%	Exod.15.13
106	**פִּתְאוֹם**	suddenly	2	0.00%	Num.6.9
107	**חֵלֶף**	instead of	2	0.00%	Num.18.21
108	**אוֹי**	Oh!	2	0.00%	Num.21.29
109	**זוּלָה**	away from	2	0.00%	Deut.1.36
110	**שֶׁ**	that, which (relative)	1	0.00%	Gen.6.3
111	**אָמְנָה**	surely	1	0.00%	Gen.20.12
112	**אֵיפֹה**	where, when, how	1	0.00%	Gen.37.16
113	**אַבְרֵךְ**	to kneel	1	0.00%	Gen.41.43
114	**הֵא**	not	1	0.00%	Gen.47.23
115	**נָא**	uncooked meat	1	0.00%	Exod.12.9
116	**נֵכַח**	opposite to	1	0.00%	Exod.14.2
117	**פְּנִימָה**	inside	1	0.00%	Lev.10.18
118	**קוֹמְמִיּוּת**	upright, erect	1	0.00%	Lev.26.13

APPENDIX D

Glossary

Every term used in this book, in one place.

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shoresh שֹׁרֶשׁ

A root: three consonants carrying an area of meaning. Written with connectors between the letters, and with no final-form letters, because it is an abstraction rather than a pronounceable word.

milah מִלָּה

A word in its own right, not built on a three-letter root. Learned as it stands. In this book, a breakdown that says *milah* rather than *shoresh* is telling you there is nothing to take apart.

prefix

A letter glued to the front of a word, carrying its own meaning. Hebrew has six: *and*, *the*, *to/for*, *in/with/by*, *from*, *like/as*.

suffix

An ending glued to the back of a word. The possessive endings mean *my*, *your*, *his*, *her*, *their*; the directional hei means *toward*.

nikud נִקּוּד

The vowel points: the dots and dashes under, inside and over the letters. Every Hebrew word in this book carries them.

teʿamim טְעָמִים

The cantillation marks: the small hooks and wedges that indicate how a verse is chanted and where it breaks. Printed on the full pasuk in this book, stripped from every word breakdown.

dagesh דָּגֵשׁ

A dot inside a letter. Among other things, it marks the place where a nun has been absorbed, and it is the signature of the Piel mold.

maqqef מַקָּף

A small high dash joining two words so that they are read as one unit. In this book a word joined forward by a maqqef is marked with a dash after it.

binyan בִּנְיָן

Literally a building: one of the molds a shoresh is poured into to become a verb. The mold decides whether the action is simple, intensive, causative or passive.

Qal קַל

The simple binyan. The plain form of the action, and the commonest.

Piel פִּעֵל

The intensive binyan, marked by a dagesh in the middle letter of the shoresh.

Hifil הִפְעִיל

The causative binyan, usually marked by a hei in front. It turns *to see* into *to show*.

Nifal נִפְעַל

The passive and reflexive binyan, usually marked by a nun in front. It turns *to see* into *to be seen*, which of Hashem is rendered *appeared*.

Qal passive

A passive counterpart of the simple binyan, rare enough that many grammars fold it into Nifal. It appears once in this perek, in pasuk 15.

perfect

A verb form presenting an action as completed. Usually rendered as English past.

imperfect

A verb form presenting an action as not completed. Usually rendered as English future, sometimes as an intention or a wish.

wayyiqtol

The narrative form: a vav on the front of an imperfect, which flips it into the past and advances the story one step. The engine of biblical narrative and by far the commonest verb form in this perek.

imperative

A command form.

infinitive construct

The *to do* form of a verb. It takes prefixes and endings, which is how Hebrew packs a whole clause into a single word.

infinitive absolute

A bare, emphatic verb form, frequently doubled with another verb to convey emphasis or continuousness.

participle

The *doing* or *one who does* form, sitting between a verb and an adjective.

construct state

The form a noun takes when it is bound to a following noun, *house of* rather than *house*. Marked in this book's grammatical labels.

absolute state

The ordinary, unbound form of a noun.

pasuk פָּסוּק

A verse.

perek פֶּרֶק

A chapter.

parsha פָּרָשָׁה

The weekly Torah portion. This book covers the opening perek of Parshas Lech Lecha.

Rashi רַשִׁ"י

Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (1040–1105), whose commentary is the standard first companion to the Chumash. Quoted here in English only.

Metsudah

The Metsudah Chumash (Metsudah Publications, 2009), the translation used throughout this book, licensed CC-BY.

APPENDIX E

Answers to the review questions

Chapter 1

1. That you can sound out vowelled Hebrew, slowly, with a finger on the page. Nothing else.
2. A translation tells you what a verse says. Reading the text means the Hebrew itself is carrying the meaning to you, which is a different experience, and the one the book aims at.
3. Part Three assumes the color coding, the six prefixes and the endings are already familiar. Without Part Two it becomes a slow exercise in looking things up.

Chapter 2

1. The shoresh supplies the area of meaning. The vowels and the affixes supply the grammar: who did it, to whom, when, and whether the word is functioning as a verb, a noun or something else.
2. 41.75% of all words in the Chumash.
3. 149 of the 268, well over half.
4. It means nothing in the perek is exotic. Every shoresh you learn here is one you will meet again constantly, so the effort of learning it is repaid across the whole Chumash.

Chapter 3

1. Because it is an abstraction rather than a word. The connectors say “these three letters as a set”, and a final-form letter would imply that the root ends a real word, which it never does.
2. The idea of building. A house is a built thing; a son is glossed “son, builder” because he builds the family line.
3. A milah is a word that is not built on three letters, אָב, אָח, שֵׁם, יָם, שִׁבְעִים. The test is mechanical: count the letters of the root. Three is a shoresh; anything else is a milah, and there is nothing to take apart.

4. Work from the outside in: peel any prefixes off the front, peel any ending off the back, and what is left is the shoresh wearing its vowels.

Chapter 4

1. *and*; *to, for*; *the*; *in, with, by*; *from*; *like, as*.
2. The prefix meaning *to, for*.
3. 11.09%, the single most frequent item in the whole Chumash.
4. Because Hebrew uses one prefix for a range of relations that English splits across three words. Which one fits is decided by what follows: a place gives *in*, an instrument gives *with* or *by*.

Chapter 5

1. It carries the possessor. English needs *my*, *your*, *his* as separate words; Hebrew puts them on the end of the noun, or on the end of a preposition.
2. Gender. One addresses a man, the other a woman, which is why the first is all over pasuk 1, where Hashem speaks to Avram, and the second appears in pesukim 12 and 13, where Avram speaks to Sarai.
3. Because it is the directional hei, not a possessive ending. On a place-word it means *toward*, and Hebrew needs no preposition at all.
4. The ending meaning *their*, once, in pasuk 5.

Chapter 6

1. Peel any prefixes off the front, outermost first; peel any ending off the back; read what remains as the stem and find its shoresh; then reassemble the English from the back of the Hebrew word forward.
2. Because the prefixes and endings are a closed, short list you can recognize instantly, whereas the shoresh is only visible once they are out of the way.
3. The beis at the front is the preposition *in*; the stem in the middle is the verb, an infinitive construct on the shoresh meaning to go out; the ending is *his*. Literally *in his going out*, that is, *when he left*.

Chapter 7

1. Yud, vav, nun and hei.
2. It collapses into the following letter, which then carries a dagesh, the dot inside the letter marks the place the nun went.
3. Two: the lamed and the kaf. The yud of the shoresh has dropped.
4. Because reading does not require deriving forms. The useful habit is recognition: a word that looks two letters short is almost always a shoresh you already know with an unstable letter hidden.

Chapter 8

1. The binyan decides what kind of action it is, simple, intensive, causative, passive. The shoresh decides what the action is about.
2. Qal: *to see*. Hifil: *to show*, that is, to cause to see. Nifal: *to be seen*, rendered *appeared*.
3. A vav placed on the front of an imperfect, which flips it into the past and moves the narrative forward one step. Narrative Hebrew uses it because it chains events: and he went, and he took, and he built.
4. Aspect, not time. The perfect presents an action as completed; the imperfect presents it as not completed. English usually renders them past and future, but that is a translation convenience rather than what the Hebrew says.

Sources. The Hebrew text is *Miqra according to the Masorah*. The English translation is the *Metsudah Chumash*, Metsudah Publications, 2009, used under CC BY; the Divine Name, printed "Adonoy" in that edition, is set here as **Hashem**, and em dashes in the quoted English are replaced with ordinary punctuation. Nothing else in the translation is altered. Rashi is quoted from the *Metsudah Rashi Chumash* (Metsudah Publications, 2009), used under CC BY, the same house as the translation, so the two agree on every name. Sefaria files a small number of comments under a neighbouring pasuk; each comment's opening phrase was checked against the text and two were moved back to the pasuk they comment on.

The word analysis, the segmentation of every word into prefix, stem and ending, and the grammatical labels, is derived from the OpenScriptures morphological Hebrew Bible (morphhb, Westminster Leningrad Codex) with Strong's numbers. The frequency tables in the appendices were compiled by counting every word of the Chumash.

A note on glosses. Every meaning printed in this book is the gloss of the word in front of you, taken from that word's own dictionary entry. Root-group glosses were not used, because they describe a family rather than a word and can be misleading for any particular member of it.

On the Hebrew. The text is printed with nikud throughout and without cantillation marks, which are a distraction to a reader who is still decoding letters. Shin and sin dots and the maqqef are kept.

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