

# Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

Parshas Chayeh Sarah 5784

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Avraham passes away and Yitzchok and Yishmael bury him.

הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר־קָנָה אַבְרָהָם מֵאֵת בְּנֵי־חֵשֶׁן שָׁמָּה קָבַר אַבְרָהָם וְשָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ:

“The field that Avraham acquired from the sons of Ches, there is buried Avraham and Sarah, his wife.” (Bereishis 25:10).

Why does the Torah use the word “acquire” here when it uses the word “take” so often to mean a purchase? Why does it say “the sons of Ches” when it was Efron that sold Avraham the land? Sarah is Avraham’s wife. There is no other Sarah mentioned and Sarah is already mentioned as having been buried there. Why does the Torah emphasize she was his wife, again?

The Gemara says, “How do we know that a woman is betrothed with money? It is derived from *kicha kicha* from the fields of Efron. It says here (regards to marriage) “Because the man takes a woman as a wife...” (Devarim 24:1) and it says there, (our parsha) “I will give silver, the field’s value, take it from me.” (Bereishis 23:13). And taking is acquiring as it says, “the field that Avraham acquired.” (Bereishis 25:10).” Bavli Kedushin 2a.

The rule of a *hekesh* (a connection made between two words or phrases in the Torah in order to learn out a point of halacha) is that both words have to be the same and stand out. Here, the Gemara compares the words “yikach” and “kach.” They are the same *root* word but not the same actual word. This cannot be a *hekesh*. Further, the Gemara says, “kicha kicha” but the word kicha does not appear either time. Also, why does it say “the field of Efron” as if both words appear there. Only one does, the other is in Devarim.

Gemara Yerushalmi illuminates the point. Gemara Yerushalmi simply says, “How do we know a woman can be betrothed through money? Because the pasuk says “Because he takes.” (Devarim 25:10).” This teaches that she is acquired through money.” Yerushalmi Kedushin 1:1. The Gemara takes it for granted that “taking” means acquiring through money. It does not learn it outright from the transaction for Efron’s field.

What Gemara Bavli is teaching is not a *hekesh*. It is that when the word “kicha” “take” in its various forms, appears in the Torah it always means acquiring for value. The Gemara means to say “taking taking like the taking of the field of Efron.” When the Torah writes about that transaction, it was Efron that did the taking. “I will give coin in field value, take it from me.” (Bereishis 23:13). Avraham bid Efron to take the coin in exchange for the field. This was a barter at its purest value. Unlike bartering for another object, even land, where some would want and others would not, bartering for silver was something that was valuable to all, and silver can travel. “He paid him four hundred silver coins, weighed according to the merchant’s rate.” (Ibid 23:16). Avraham gave him coins that

were the weight and purity of the silver at the merchant's standard. Efron can take that anywhere to barter for anything else he would like.

That is how Gemara Yerushalmi and Bavli both know it is money that can be used to betroth a woman. While the Yerushalmi says "taking" and it takes it for granted that every time the Torah says "take" it means for value offered, the Bavli goes further to explain it is for coin and it is learned out specifically from the first transaction in the Torah that is done through coin. Further, just like Avraham told Efron to "take from me," a transaction is only legitimate when the party receiving the money takes it. It cannot be given by force. It must be an arm's length transaction where the seller takes willingly.

וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָהָם אֶל-עֶפְרוֹן וַיִּשְׁקַל אַבְרָהָם לְעֶפְרוֹן אֶת-הַכֶּסֶף אֲשֶׁר דָּבַר בְּאָזְנוֹ בְּנֵי-חֶשׁ אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת שֶׁקֶל כֶּסֶף עֶבֶר לְסֹחֵר: "And Avraham listened to Efron's terms, and Avraham weighed out for Efron the coins that he said in the presence of the Bnei Ches, four hundred silver coins, at the merchant's rate." (Ibid). Coins are called "shekel" (lit. weighed silver) because they are to be of a certain purity and a certain weight. Avraham paid full value to Efron. He allowed Efron to state the terms. (Ibid 23:15). The result was the land and all in it passed "to Avraham for a possession, witnessed by Bnei Ches, and all that assembled at the town's gate (the marketplace)." (Ibid 23:18).

This accomplished two things. While Avraham purchased it from Efron the Torah state it was the Bnei Ches. It says after the transaction, וַיָּקָם הַשָּׂדֶה וְהַמְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ לְאַבְרָהָם לְאֶחָזִית, קָבַר מֵאֵת בְּנֵי-חֶשׁ: "And the field 'got up' and the cave therein, to Avraham, for an eternal possession for burial from the Bnei Ches." (Ibid 23:20). The field changed hands forever. It was important for Avraham to buy this land for the same reason he refused booty after the great war. (Ibid 14:23). As the Torah points out, "After the transaction, Avraham brought for burial his wife, Sarah, to the cave in the field of Machpelah, upon the plains of Mamre, which is Chevron, in the Land of Canaan." (Ibid 23:19). This is the key. It was in the Land of Canaan. Avraham had rights to this land. However, he wanted no further claims by anyone to take it back, least of all the Bnei Ches. Ches, the son of Canaan, should not claim that field was given to Avraham as a gift to be taken back later. It had to be an "eternal possession." He purchased the land in the Land of Canaan from Canaan. This was his first "eternal possession" in the Land. It was for a burial plot but it was also a stake in the Land. Avraham knew the promise that Hashem made to him. He was not trying to speed up the process. At the same time, if he acquired a burial plot then it had to come with no strings attached.

Avraham approached the Bnei Ches saying "I am a sojourner and resident alien." (Ibid 23:4). He was telling them that he already was a settler of the land. He wanted, however, "an eternal possession to bury among them." (Ibid). They wanted to cajole him by admitting he had the right to the land by the Lord. (Ibid 23:6). Efron was a Chiti – from Ches. (Ibid 23:10). Avraham admitted to Efron's ownership (ibid 23:9) and wanted to purchase it so there can be no future claims against it, ever.

Further, just as Avraham sent engagement gifts for Rikah (Ibid 24:22,47) and Rivkah accepted and went willingly (ibid 24:58), so too, he married Sarah that same way. Thus, the pasuk says, "Sarah, his wife." She was his wife the same way every wife becomes a wife, though consent and betrothal money.