

פרשת חיי שרה / Parashat Chayei Sarah

Shabbat Cheshvan 17, 5769, November 22, 2008
32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d
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To be blessed or to be a blessing?

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Genesis 23:1-25:18
הפטרה: 1 Kings 1:1-31
הברית: Matthew 1:1-17 1 Corinthians 15:50-57
החדשה

10 In this week's parsha, following the triennial cycle (*Bereshit / Genesis 24:10-24:52*) I would like to study the etymology (study of the historical development) of the Hebrew verb ברך (Barach) which means "to bless." Following the various occurrences of the word "barach" throughout the Masoretic text one of the most often found uses of the verb is located in *Bereshit / Genesis 12:2* when HaShem
15 blesses Avraham and his seed. One of the less often uses for ברך is found in *Bereshit / Genesis 24:11* where "barach" can also mean "kneel" (in this instance the servant of Avraham caused the camels to kneel outside of the city). Another variation of the Hebrew word is "berachah" meaning "a blessing" or "a gift/present." By studying the ancient use of the word we can gain insight behind
20 the meaning of "barach" and the meaning of blessing. One way to think about it is to bring a gift to another while kneeling out of respect. Another way to look at this word is to do or give something of value to another. G-d "blesses" us by providing for our needs and likewise we in turn "bless" G-d by giving Him of ourselves as His servants.

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בראשית 12:2

פרש' ויאמר יהוה אל-אברהם לך-לך מארצך וממולדתך יב ׀
2 ומבית אביך אל-הארץ אשר אראך: ואעשה לך גויל
3 ואברכה ואגדלה שמך ויהוה ברכה: ואברכה מברכה
4 ומקלה אאר ונברכו בך כל משפחת האדמה: וילך



בראשית 24:11

10 אדניו וישבע לו על-הדבר הזה: ויקח העבד עשרה
גמלים מנמלי אדניו וילך וכל-טוב אדניו בידו ויקם
11 וילך אל-ארם נהרים אל-עיר נחור: ויברך הנמלים
מתוך לעיר אל-באר המים לעת ערב לעת צאת

Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-3

12:1 Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 12:2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.' (NASB)

Bereshit / Genesis 24:10-11

24:10 Then the servant took ten camels from the camels of his master, and set out with a variety of good things of his master's in his hand; and he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. 24:11 He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water. (NASB)

30 Biblical Hebrew is primarily a verbal language which is derived from root
words. The root words are usually tri-consonantal groups that comprise the
essence of the word's meaning. Therefore, from a given group of consonants any
number of words can be derived that share the same root word. One example is
35 from מלך (mlk) one can derive מלך, מלכות, מלך which means "king,"
"kingdom," and "ruled" respectively. The verbal stem system is an offshoot of
the root that is used to indicate the properties of voice and aspect. In Hebrew
there are seven major stems, Qal, Niphal, Piel, Pual, Hiphil, Hophal, and hithpael,
I listed six verbal stems for the Hebrew word barach below:

40 **ברך (barach)**

<u>Verbal Stem</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
קל (Qal)	to bless, to kneel
נפעל (Niphal)	to be blessed, bless oneself
פעל (Piel)	to bless
45 פעל (Pual)	to be blessed, be adored
התפעל (Hiphil)	to cause to kneel
הפעיל (Hithpael)	to bless oneself

50 Jewish tradition requires that a person bless the Lord for each detail of one's
life experience. In the Siddur there are hundreds upon hundreds of Hebrew
blessings (berachot). Among the blessings listed in the Siddur are those for
waking up in the morning, putting on new cloths, washing ones hands, eating
various foods and even going to the restroom. Rabbinic tradition says it is
55 forbidden to enjoy such things of life without saying a blessing and thanking the
Lord (see *Talmud Bavli Berachot 35a*).

Hebrew blessings generally have a standard beginning and can be recognized
by the phrase "blessed are thou" (Baruch atah). This phrase is called the שם
ומלכות "shem u'malchut" which means "the Name and Sovereignty," and starts
with the affirmation that the Lord is King over the entire Universe.

60 **ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם**

65 Studying the use of the word barach throughout the Tanach reveals that the
word translated as "blessed" (baruch) is also related to the word for "knee"
(berech). The question then is in the ancient Hebrew language of the scriptures,
does the word "blessing" (b'rakha) implying an association between humbling
ourselves, kneeling before the Lord in recognition of His Holiness, and receiving
personal blessing from Him?

70 The apostle Shaul (Paul) also wrote in similar fashion of typical Hebrew
blessing form in the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) of blessing G-d our
Father in Heaven.

siddur
(Singular: סידור;
plural: siddurim)
is a Jewish
prayer book
containing a set
order of daily
prayers.

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Ephesians 1:3

1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, (NASB)

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Ephesians 1:3

בָּרוּךְ הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים אָבִי אֲדֹנָי יֵשׁוּעַ הַמָּשִׁיחַ אֲשֶׁר בָּרַךְ אֶת תְּנוּ מַשְׁמַי מְעוֹנוּ בְּכָל-בְּרָכָת הַנִּפְשׁ בַּמָּשִׁיחַ:

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Now you may ask the question how can I bless the Lord? Blessing and reciting a blessing is a way in which we can express our thankfulness for the gift of life that G-d has given to us. This illustrates the issue of attitude towards G-d. When blessing the Lord, we should be grateful for what we have been given. The Hebrew word barach however suggests we should also be a blessing to G-d by giving ourselves as His servants. That means being a blessing to the Lord in the life that we live!

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Language reveals something of the culture and people during the time of the writing of the Holy Scriptures. We also learn about our responsibility as believers not only are we blessed of G-d but we should also be a blessing unto G-d. This is a great challenge because it brings into question every moment of our existence. G-d created mankind for a reason, so that we would bring Him glory, be thankful to Him and recognize Him as our beloved Creator. Isn't this the essence of the meaning behind the word barach? Lets re-evaluate our lives in our role of being a blessing to others by considering the following questions:

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Questions to consider

1. G-d tells Avram that he will be a blessing to others. How are you a blessing to others?
2. Being a blessing requires us to focus on 2 things, (i) focus upon G-d and (ii) focus upon the other person. Yeshua gave us an example to live by, i.e. healing, teaching, sharing, serving, and ultimately dying. What place do we have if we are not concerned with blessing other people?
3. Have you ever prayed G-d's blessing on another person's life?
4. Who are you a blessing to today?
5. Who could you be a blessing too? (What could you share with people to be a blessing to them?)

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Conclusion

Let us seek to be blessed so that we can be a blessing to others. Blessing shouldn't be for our own comfort but that we might be a blessing to other people. Notice something when G-d tells Avram that he will be a blessing to others, this

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followed G-d's promise that He would bless Avram first. This demonstrates that we should be bold and faithful in claiming G-d's blessing for our lives in order that we can pass it on to others.

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Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,

“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever