

פרשת נח Is that Hebrew or English?

R' Reuvain Margolis in his Sefer Himer¹ quotes the Shela that when the world was created, there was only Loshon Hakodesh. As a result of the Dor Haflaga, where languages got mixed up,² Loshon Hakodesh got mixed into other languages.³

In light of this we can comprehend why there are many similarities in English to Loshon Hakodesh. The following is a sample of the many instances:

The word פיוס means to appease. Saying this word, we notice it sounds the same as its meaning-appease. The term אשם; guilt, sounds similar to ashamed. כפול; double, twice when pronounced sounds identical to couple. How about halo (circle of light) and בהלך נרו; lamp shining.⁴ גורן; granary, sounds like grain. פרט; part, piece sounds similar to part. סתירה; contradiction, sounds like mystery. What about מטר; rain, and meteorologist. הדר; splendor, sounds alike to adore. איכר; farmer, reminds us of agriculture. How about Davening and Divine.

Here some other words: Gematria and Geometry. קול and call. פרדס and paradise.⁵ לב and love. אהלה and Aloe. דרך and direction. ישן; old, ancient.⁶ בטח; certainty, and bet. כמו and common. נפל and fall. עול; sin,⁷ and evil. ארץ and earth. דיו; ink, and dye.⁸ עוד and add. שום; estimate, and assume. ככר and cake. קרן and corner as קרן זוית is a corner. עיקר; the main part, and core.⁹ טעם; reason, taste sounds like theme, which is what a theme is. בבל and babble. רגיל; to do by rote, sounds like regularity. מוביל; to bring forth¹⁰ sounds like mobile.¹¹ רב and Rif-Raf. יין; wine, and vine. שטופי זמה and steeped in immorality. גמל and camel. בית and base.

Here are some more:

1) The words שלחן לגד...¹² refers to a deity. Is it any coincidence that גד sounds the same as god.

¹ Margaliyos Hayom, Sanhedin 4b s.v. ויעוין.

² The Chizkuni (11:7, s.v. אשר) says that everyone then spoke 70 languages and each one forgot all the languages except one. This one that they now knew, no one else knew. Parenthetically, the Chizkuni (lived in 13th century) wrote and called his commentary on the Torah by this name in memory of his father who lost his right hand because of loyalty to his faith as חזקוני means strengthen me.

³ Words that are found in the Torah from another language- such as טט and פת which mean two in another language (Shemos 13:16, Rashi. These two words combine to make the word טטפת since the Tefilin that is worn on the head has four compartments [and 2+2 is 4]) is because Loshon Hakodesh got mixed into other languages.

⁴ Iyov 29:3

⁵ See Chagigah 13b

⁶ Moreover, ancient also sounds like עתיק, the Aramaic word that is translated as ancient, old.

⁷ As in עול ואין משפט in (Devarim 32:4).

⁸ The Pnei Moshe (Yerushalmi Avoda Zara 5:14, s.v. כלי) writes that פפייר is a type of plant where paper is made from in order to write. Is it any surprise that פפייר and paper sound the same.

⁹ שרש; root, source- sounds like source (when pronounced as a ש; sin).

¹⁰ As in יבולה; לא תתן את יבולה (Devarim 11:17), which means produce- that which is brought forth.

¹¹ An automobile takes a person from one place to another. It has been pointed out that the word automobile can be broken up into מוביל and אוטו.

¹² Yeshaya 65:11, Mahari Kara

2) Skin is called עור which also means blind as in לפני עור.¹³ This is just as we find in English that hide means to conceal (like blind) as well as skin (as in the hide of an animal).

3) The word God in English comes from the word good. This stems from the Pasuk טוב ה' לכל Hashem is good to everyone.¹⁴

4) The term goodbye is a contraction of 'God be with you.' This sounds familiar to what the sages instituted that one should greet his friend with Hashem's name as Boaz greeted the harvesters ה' עמכם Hashem is with you.¹⁵

5) The word elevate sounds akin to the letter א when pronounced. This is because א refers to that which is higher, as is shown in the following: A) א spelled out is אלף; 1,000, the highest number in the decimal system. B) א refers to Hashem, the אלוהים של עולם.¹⁶ C) The word אלוף is translated as a chief.¹⁷

6) בגד means a garment as well as a traitor (בוגד). Another word for traitor is turncoat (which is an article of clothing- coat).

7) Saying Abracadabra, we see a relation to אברא כאדברא; I will create with my speech.¹⁸ This is how the world was created- with 10 utterances.¹⁹

8) There is a saying in English "look into it." We see a parallel between עין; eye and עיון; look deeper.

The following are some connections of English to Aramaic (language of the Gemara), another language that has holiness.²⁰ ממון; money, and money sound the same.²¹ דיילמא; maybe, perhaps- and dilemma. ארעא; land, and area. דו; two, and duo.

In light of what we have mentioned, we have fulfilled²² קחו עמכם דברים ושובו אל ה' as we took these words and returned them to Hashem, their source- tracing back these words to their genuine language.

Proper thinking

We have a concept of מעשה, דבור, מחשבה; thought, speech and action.²³ One can only be in total control of דבור and מעשה but not מחשבה since we have limited control over our thoughts.²⁴

¹³ Vayikra 19:14

¹⁴ Tehillim 145:9

¹⁵ Brachos 54a. Rus 2:4

¹⁶ Chagigah 16a

¹⁷ As in אלופי אדום (Shemos 15:15).

¹⁸ This is a phrase magicians use when they magically want to create something.

¹⁹ Avos 5:1. Rashi (Bamidbar 13:30) tells us that ויהם expresses silence. הם sounds like hush- to be quiet.

²⁰ The Eitz Chaim (42. Also Siduro Shel Shabbos 2,1,1) tells us that which we have in creation has an intermediary connecting two opposites just as a bridge connects two ends. Aramaic is what connects Loshon Hakodesh and other languages.

²¹ In Spanish, Dinero means money. Is it any coincidence that one of the currencies in the Gemara's time was the דינר; Dinar.

²² Hoshea 14:3

²³ The Sefas Emes says this idea applies to every Mitzva. The Kavana is the מחשבה. The Bracha before the Mitzva as well as the learning of the laws and the Torah of the Mitzva is דבור. The Mitzva itself is the מעשה.

²⁴ The Shomer Emunim (Drush Habitachon 12) says that every limb can reject and expel just as we do through sweat and eliminating our waste. This also applies to spirituality. We may have good and bad thoughts but we need to rid ourselves of the bad as much as is in our control.

On Shabbos we get special Heavenly assistance to rule over מחשבות. In this way we can grasp²⁵ מתנה טובה יש לי בבית גנוי ושבת שמה; I have a wonderful gift in my treasure house and Shabbos is its name, as with the precious gift of Shabbos, we receive assistance in ruling over our thoughts- referred to as בית גנוי, since no one knows what one is thinking. For this reason, the end letters of רבות²⁶ are שבת since on Shabbos we should think of Hashem more as the Pasuk finishes ועצת ה' היא תקום.

In the Shir Shel Yom of Shabbos we say מאד עמקו מחשבתך; your- Hashem's- thoughts are very deep.²⁷ Rearranging the letters of מאד, we get אדם as the thoughts of man on Shabbos should be deeper since during the week we may be in a rush taking the kids to school, going to work and the like.²⁸ On Shabbos we should think of all the kindness Hashem did to us in the previous week. We should see Hashem more in our lives.²⁹

Languages

Why is the language of the Torah called לשון הקודש, holy?

The Ramban explains that the language of the Torah is called לשון הקודש because Divrei Torah, prophesy, and words of Kedusha were said in this language.³⁰ This is the language that Hashem talks to prophets and people such as the 10 commandments. This is the language that contains the names of Hashem such as א-ל, אלהים and the like....³¹

In explaining the advantages of davening in Loshon Hakodesh, the Biur Halacha³² writes that when the הגדולה אנשי כנסת instituted the Nusach of davening there were 120 זקנים and many prophets. They counted and weighed each Bracha with its words and combination of its letters with many high and lofty secrets. When we say these words even if we don't know how to have Kavana it is still a proper Tefila. This is because the words themselves activate Kedusha³³ in the upper spheres which doesn't apply to one who davens in another language.³⁴

We know that Loshon Hakodesh created the world and as the Midrash says that Hashem looked into the Torah and created the world.³⁵ Consequently, Lashon Hakodesh is unlike other languages in that the word tells us about the object. For this reason, דבר means a word and an object. The following are some of the many examples: (1) a hand which contains 14 joints is called יד. Is it any coincidence that יד has a sum of 14. Furthermore, 1+4 is 5, referring to the 5 fingers. (2) The word שן; tooth is related to שני; change, since the food goes through a changing process while it is in one's mouth as the food enters the mouth whole and is then ground up by the teeth. שן also means to repeat since it repeats the grinding process until the food is ground. It also means sharp as in שיננא since a tooth is sharp enabling it to grind up the food. (3) We know that a firstborn son gets a double inheritance. Thus, the letters that compose the word בכר are double in its numerical value of its previous letter. That is כ, 2 in Gematria, is double than א, 1. כ-20 is twice more than י-10. Finally, ר-200 is two times more than ק-100.

In light of this we can explain why לשון הקודש is called a שפה ברורה; clear language.³⁶ Indeed, בשפה ברורה has the same numerical value as לשון הקודש.³⁷ This is what is meant in our Parsha דברים אחדים; unified words, because the word is the thing itself.³⁸

Taking this a step further, each letter³⁹ in לשון הקודש has its own meaning.⁴⁰ This contributes to the meaning of other letters that join with it in forming a word. For example, פד means to separate. This is a combination of the meanings of those letters that compose that word. This is just as we see today that scientists know how to break up chemical compounds into their components. To illustrate: they discovered that table salt is composed of sodium and chloride. They therefore named it sodium chloride (NaCl).

When Adam saw the different animals and birds, he was able to tell which letters brought these beings to life. This is how he was able to give them names. For instance, when he saw an ox, he saw it was comprised of the letters ש, ו, ר and therefore gave it that name. This is what is meant in וכל אשר יקרא לו האדם נפש חיה הוא שמו; whatever man called each living creature, that remained its name.⁴¹

To receive this on a weekly email, feedback, comments or to support this publication please contact Yehoshua Alt at parshadt28@gmail. לעילוי נשמת שמואל אביגדור בן יצחק מאיר

²⁵ Beitza 16a. Halekach Vhalibuv, Kedoshim, Rosh Chodesh Iyar 5763/4

²⁶ Mishlei 19:21

²⁷ Tehillim 92:6

²⁸ On Shabbos we are in no rush and it thus affords us more time to think and contemplate. We are therefore told not to take big steps on Shabbos and as we say in Zemiroס פוסעים בו פסיעה קטנה (כל מקדש) and הלוכך (מה ידידות) תהא בנחת.

²⁹ For this reason פסוקי דזמרה on Shabbos is longer.

³⁰ The לשון הקודש is called so because of the different Mitzvos that were determined by it such as Eruchin, Pidyon Bechor and so on.

³¹ Ramban, Shemos 30:13. The Rambam (Moreh Nevuchim 3,8) says that Loshon Hakodesh is called so because of the clean terminology. This includes words such as ביאה, להשתין, and the like.

³² The Ramchal writes (Derech Hashem 4:2, Talmud Torah) that when one says the words of Torah, he draws down the השפעה.

³³ Additionally, in the Brachos we recite, the combination of letters and its order are arranged exactly and specifically unique to bring out the energy of that Bracha. For example, in Shemona Esrei in ברך עלינו the Bracha for פרנסה- the combination of the letters bring out the energy for פרנסה.

³⁴ The Baal Hatanya (Torah Ohr, Mishpatim, s.v. כמעשה) says that when one uses a language for Torah and Mitzvos, the language gets elevated.

³⁵ Breishis Rabba 1:1. There is also a connection when different words share the same letters. This is because words that share the same letters, are composed of the same energy. Examples of this are the following: 1) רגל which means to do things by rote is composed of the same letters as the word גרל; lottery, that which is random, without forethought. 2) Reversing the letters of רע we get ער; awaken, because the purpose of רע is in order to awaken us.

³⁶ Tzefanya 3:9, Ibn Ezra

³⁷ Siddur Yaavetz, Yotzer Ohr. Similarly, the Baal Haturim comments that לשון הקודש has an identical sum to שפה אחת.

³⁸ Breishis 11:1

³⁹ The Kav Hayashar writes I saw that many Gedolai Yisrael were accustomed that when they would draw water (in regard to Pesach) they would take a small container and count each time they poured א, ב, ג, and so on until they completed the Alef-Beis. This was in order to draw down the sanctity of the letters of the Torah into the water (Taamai Minhagim, pg 218, s.v. ובספר קב).

⁴⁰ Examples are בית, ג, house, and גומל, to give and so on. This is in contrast to letters of other languages.

⁴¹ Breishis 2:19