



Yaakov Avinu Took Cedars that Avraham Used to Welcome Guests for Yisrael to Build a Sanctuary for the Shechinah with

In this week's parsha, parshas Vayigash, we will examine the preparations made by Yaakov Avinu for his descent to Mitzrayim. After learning that his wise, beloved son, Yosef HaTzaddik, was still alive and well and was the Viceroy of Mitzrayim, he was invited to come down to Mitzrayim with his entire household. As the passuk describes (Bereishis 46, 1): **”ויסע ישראל וכל אשר לו: Yisrael set out with all that he had, and he came to Be'er Sheva.**

Our blessed sages wonder why Yaakov Avinu opted to travel to Be'er Sheva before going down to Mitzrayim. With their “ruach hakodesh,” they reveal the following to us in the Midrash (B.R. 94, 4): **”ויסע ישראל וכל אשר לו ויבוא בארה שבע. להיכן: מה הלך. אמר רב נחמן, שהלך לקוץ ארזים שנטע אברהם זקינו בבאר שבע, היך מה דאת אמר ויטע אשל בבאר שבע ויקרא שם בשם ה' אל עולם.”** Rav Nachman teaches us that he went to Be'er Sheva to cut down cedars that had been planted there by his grandfather, Avraham Avinu. This assertion is supported by the passuk (ibid. 21, 33): **”He planted an ‘eshel’ in Be'er Sheva and there he proclaimed the name of Hashem, G-d of the Universe.”**

Further on, the Midrash teaches us what Yaakov intended to do with that cedarwood. It refers to the construction of the Mishkan, where it is written (Shemos 26, 28): **”והבריה התיכון: בתוך הקרשים, אמר רבי לוי, והבריה התיכון שנים ושלשים אמה היו בו, מוהיכן מוצאו אותו לשעה, אלא מלמד שהיו מוצנעין עמהם מימות יעקב אבינו.”** **“The middle bar between the beams.” Rabbi Levi said: The middle bar was thirty-two cubits long. Where did they find it at that particular moment? Rather, it teaches us that they (the wood) were concealed with them (Yisrael in Mitzrayim) from the time of Yaakov Avinu.**

Thus, we learn that the middle bar that extended between the beams of the Mishkan, connecting the two sides, was made from the cedars that Yaakov brought with him to Mitzrayim from the “eshel” that Avraham had planted in Be'er Sheva. We also find this same explanation in the Targum YoNasan in parshas Vayakheil (ibid. 36, 33).

Clearly, Yaakov Avinu did not detour to Be'er Sheva for naught. The cedarwood he brought with him was an integral, essential part of the Mishkan. Avraham's cedars were used to fashion the middle bar of the Mishkan that connected its beams. It connected them both structurally and spiritually, imbuing the Mishkan with kedushah through and through.

Avraham's “Eshel” Was a Place of Prayer

Let us delve deeper into Yaakov Avinu's profound intent. Concerning the “eshel” planted by Avraham Avinu, we find two interpretations. According to the first interpretation, which is based on the Gemara (Sotah 10a), Avraham planted it for the sake of welcoming guests and bringing them closer to Hashem. Here is the pertinent passage from the Gemara:

”ויטע אשל בבאר שבע, אמר ריש לקיש, מלמד שעשה פרדס ונטע בו כל מיני מגדים... ויקרא שם בשם ה' אל עולם, אמר ריש לקיש, אל תיקרי ויקרא אלא ויקריא, מלמד שהקריא אברהם אבינו לשמו של הקב”ה בפה כל עובר ושב. כיצד, לאחר שאכלו ושתו עמדו לברכו, אמר להם וכי משלי אכלתם, משל אלקי עולם אכלתם, הודו ושבחו וברכו למי שאמר והיה העולם.”

“He planted an ‘eshel’ in Be'er Sheva.” Reish Lakish said: It teaches that he made an orchard and planted in it

many types of fine fruits . . . “There he proclaimed the name of Hashem, G-d of the Universe.” Reish Lakish said: Do not read it, “he proclaimed,” but rather “he caused to call.” This teaches that Avraham Avinu caused the name of HKB”H to be called out by the mouth of every passerby. How did he accomplish this? After they ate and drank, they stood up to bless him (Avraham). He would say to them, “Was it of my food that you ate? Rather, it was the food of the G-d of the World that you ate. Therefore, thank, praise and bless He Who spoke and caused the world to come into existence.”

The second interpretation is that of the Targum Onkelos. When the passuk says: “There he proclaimed the name of Hashem, G-d of the Universe”—it is telling us that he prayed to Hashem there. We find the same interpretation in the Targum YoNasan. Thus, according to their interpretation, the “eshel” was a type of beit-Kenesses for praying to Hashem. This concurs very nicely with the teaching in the Gemara (Berachos 26b) that Avraham Avinu instituted tefilas Shacharis: **אברהם תיקן תפלת שחרית**.

The Targum Yerushalmi combines the two interpretations. On the one hand, Avraham Avinu planted an orchard in Be’er Sheva to provide his guests with food and drink. He did not, however, request any money for them as recompense. Rather, he impressed upon them that he was not the actual provider but Hashem, the Creator of the Universe, was. As such, they were obligated to bless Him and thank Him. In this manner, they did not leave his abode until he converted them and instructed them in the ways of Hashem.

Based on this introduction, we can suggest that this explains why it was vital for Yaakov Avinu to detour to Be’er Sheva to cut down the cedars planted by Avraham Avinu. It was essential that they be used for the middle bar of the Mishkan. Let us refer to an elucidation in the Gemara (Megillah 29a) related to the words of the prophet (Yechezkel 11, 16): **וַיֹּאֲהִי לָהֶם לְמִקְדָּשׁ**: **“I have been for them a ‘Mikdash m’ahat’ (a miniature Sanctuary).” Rabbi Yitzchak said: These are the synagogues and study halls in Bavel.** Thus, we see that every beit-Kenesses we pray in and beit-midrash we study Torah in is like a miniature Sanctuary—a “Mikdash m’ahat”—a place where HKB”H rests His Shechinah, since they possess a semblance of the kedushah of the Beis HaMikdash.

Yaakov Avinu Prepared the Middle Bar from the Beis Kenesses in which Avraham Prayed

We will now endeavor to explain the connection between the kedushah of a beit-Kenesses to the kedushah of the Beis Mikdash. The purpose of the Beis Mikdash was to offer korbanos, as the Rambam writes (Hilchos Beis HaBechirah 1, 1): **It is a mitzvas aseh to build a house for Hashem, equipped to have korbanos offered in it.** Furthermore, we have learned in the Gemara (Berachos 26b): **“תפלות כנגד תמידין תקנום”—the tefilos were instituted corresponding to the “Tamid” offerings.** Thus, it is apparent that our tefilos to Hashem are a form of korbanos.

In fact, korbanos and tefilah are quite similar. When offering a korban, blood is spilled on the mizbeiach to Hashem. Similarly, sincere, heartfelt tefilah means pouring our hearts out to Hashem. Let us introduce the words of the Maor Einayim (Vaeschanan), who cites the interpretation of the holy Ba’al Shem Tov, zy”a, of the passuk (Tehillim 79, 3): **“שפכו דמם כמים”**—**they have poured out their blood like water around Yerushalayim, and there is none who buries.** Here are his sacred words:

“כי נודע שהלב הוא בחינת ירושלים, שהוא באמצע הגוף, כמו ירושלים שהיא באמצע העולם וכמבואר בספרים. ונודע שהתפלה נקרא שפיקה כמו שכתוב ולפני ה' ישפוך שיחו וגו', ונקרא שפיקות הנפש... וזהו שפכו דמם כמים שהוא כינוי לתפלה, סביבות ירושלים, פירוש סביב הלב, שאין דיבורי תפלתו יוצאין מן הלב, כי לבו כל עמו כאמור, רק דבורו הוא סביב הלב, ולא מתוך הלב. וזהו סביב ירושלים ואין קובר, פירוש, שאין קובר וחופר את הדיבור מבחינת ירושלים שהיא הלב, רק מן השפה ולחוש, אחד בפה ואחד בלב.”

It is known that the heart is like Yerushalayim. It is in the center of the body just like Yerushalayim is in the center of the world, as explained in the sefarim. It is known that tefilah is called pouring, as it is written (Tehillim 102, 1): “And he pours forth his supplications before Hashem.” And it is called pouring out of the soul . . . This is the meaning of: “They have poured out their blood,” which is a reference to tefilah; “around Yerushalayim,” meaning around the heart. Because his words of tefilah do not emanate from the heart, because his heart is not with him, so to speak (meaning that his tefilah is insincere), but rather from around the heart, but not from within the heart. This is the meaning of “around Yerushalayim, and there is none who buries.” In other words, there is none who buries and digs up the speech from that which resembles Yerushalayim, namely

the heart. It is merely lip service (insincere)—saying one thing but meaning something else.

With this insight, we can better explain Yaakov’s rationale for stopping off in Be’er Sheva. As explained, he wanted to cut down some of the cedars that his grandfather had planted to use to fashion the middle bar connecting the parts of the Mishkan. That is where Avraham had introduced people to Hashem and His Torah; that was the beit-Kenesses where Avraham poured out his heart to Hashem together with those whom he indoctrinated in the ways of the Torah. Therefore, Yaakov wished to extend the immense kedushah of Avraham to the middle bar, which was the focal point of the Mishkan. Thus, anyone who sinned and wished to perform teshuvah and wished to draw nearer to Hashem could bring his korban to Hashem in the Mishkan. There, he would be imbued with the kedushah of Avraham Avinu, who brought people closer to Hashem and prayed there with sincere devotion.

Receiving Guests Is Greater than Greeting the Shechinah

Since it is the nature of Torah to be elucidated in seventy diverse ways, we will propose another explanation for Yaakov Avinu’s rationale for going to Be’er Sheva to cut down cedars that had been planted by Avraham for the sake of the middle bar of the Mishkan. We will refer to the Gemara (Shabbas 127a): **”גדולה הכנסת אורחים מהקבלת פני שכינה, דכתיב (בראשית יח-ג) ויאמר אדני אם נא מצאתי חן בעיניך אל נא תעבור וגו’—receiving guests (“hachnasas orchim”) is greater than greeting the Shechinah. For it is written (Bereishis 18, 3): “And he (Avraham) said, ‘My lord, if I have now found favor in Your eyes, please do not leave your servant.’”**

In other words, Avraham beseeched HKB”H not to leave him but to wait and stay with him until he had a chance to receive his guests. Based on Avraham’s sense of priorities, we learn the importance and greatness of “hachnasas orchim.” The commentaries ask: Indeed, we learn from Avraham that receiving guests is greater than greeting the Shechinah, but where did Avraham learn this from?

It seems apparent that Avraham Avinu learned this from HKB”H Himself. For HKB”H visited Avraham on the third day after his “milah,” only after seeing that Avraham was distressed and suffering at the doorway to his tent, in the intense heat of the day, searching for guests. This prompted HKB”H to arrange

for three malachim to pass his way, so that he could perform the mitzvah of “hachnasas orchim.” HKB”H could have visited Avraham earlier on the third day well before he went out to sit in the heat in search of guests to receive. This led Avraham Avinu to deduce that the mitzvah of “hachnasas orchim” takes priority over greeting the Shechinah. Hence, he mustered up the courage to beseech HKB”H: **“Please do not leave your servant.”** Avraham realized that it was Hashem’s will that he go and welcome the guests, even though it meant leaving the divine Presence.

In the Merit of the Mitzvah of “Hachnasas Orchim” HKB”H Is Greeted as a Guest in Olam HaZeh

To embellish this thought, we will endeavor to explain why “hachnasas orchim” takes priority over greeting the Shechinah. Let us refer to the Midrash Tanchuma (Nasso 16): **”בשעה שברא—when HKB”H created the world, He yearned to have an abode among those below like He has among those above.** What is preventing HKB”H from having an abode down below?

To answer this question, let us refer to the passuk (Tehillim 115, 16): **”השמים שמים לה’ והארץ נתן לבני אדם—**as for the heavens, the heavens are for Hashem; but the earth He has given to mankind. According to this passuk, it seems that HKB”H designated the spiritual heavens as His residence; while He gave human beings the material, physical earth. This is the message of the passuk (ibid. 33, 13): **”משמים הביט ה’ ראה את כל בני האדם, ממוכוך שבתו השגיח אל כל יושבי הארץ—**from heaven Hashem looks down, He sees all mankind; from His place of dwelling, He oversees all the inhabitants of earth.

This then is the meaning of the Midrash: **HKB”H longed to have an abode among those below like He has among those above.** HKB”H wants people to have homes down on earth that reflect kedushah and taharah, so that He can come visit them. As we learn in the Gemara (Sotah 17a): **”דריש רבי עקיבא איש ואשה—זכו שכינה ביניהן—**Rabbi Akiva expounded: **If a husband and wife are deserving, the Shechinah dwells among them.** Thus, we learn that if a Jew sanctifies his home, conducting all of his daily life in accord with the precepts of the Torah and its mitzvos, he will merit having the presence of the Shechinah in his home. In effect, it is a form of “hachnasas orchim”; he is welcoming HKB”H as a guest in his home in Olam HaZeh.

With this understanding, we can begin to appreciate the importance of “hachnasas orchim.” In the merit of welcoming guests into one’s home, midah k’neged midah, one is privileged to also have HKB”H among his guests by having the Shechinah dwell in his home. Conversely, if one neglects to welcome guests into one’s home, HKB”H will also not want to be a guest in his home. Thus, “hachnasas orchim” is the key factor that merits a person the presence of the Shechinah.

When I searched for a source corroborating this concept, I found it in the Tikunei Zohar (Tikun 6): “זכאה איהו מאן דמקבל:” אורחין ברעו שלים כאילו מקבל אפי שכינתא דבמדה דמדד בר נש בה מודדין ליה.” Anyone who receives guests sincerely, it is as if he is receiving the presence of the Shechinah. For, a person is treated in the manner that he treats others. So, if a person welcomes guests into his home happily and willingly, then, correspondingly, the Shechinah is also willing and happy to be a guest in his home.

Now, this illuminates for us the profound wisdom of Yaakov Avinu. He journeyed to Be’er Sheva, prior to his descent to Mitzrayim, to cut down cedar trees that had been planted by Avraham Avinu, his grandfather. He wanted them for the middle bar that would connect the beams of the Mishkan. After all, the purpose of the Mishkan was to provide a dwelling place for the Shechinah and fulfill HKB”H’s wish of having an abode below among His people. This is the message of the passuk (Shemos 25, 8): “ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם”—**they shall make Me a Sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them.** Based on what we have just learned, however, there is one prerequisite. To merit the dwelling of HKB”H among us, we must prove that we are worthy by observing the mitzvah of “hachnasas orchim.”

Avraham Avinu had planted those cedar trees in order to welcome guests and to introduce them to the ways of Hashem. Therefore, Yaakov Avinu wisely travelled to Be’er Sheva to cut down those cedars for the middle bar of the Mishkan. For the kedushah of the middle bar of the Mishkan, the dwelling place of the Shechinah, is in the merit of Avraham Avinu, who paved the way for all of Yisrael to perform the mitzvah of “hachnasas orchim.”

The Mishkan Was Comparable to Gan Eden prior to the “Cheit Eitz HaDa’as”

It gives me great pleasure to present a novel approach to my brothers concerning Yaakov’s profound rationale for going to

Be’er Sheva. Our blessed sages teach us an amazing chiddush; the Mishkan, where HKB”H rested His Shechinah in the midbar was similar to the original Gan Eden. For, the Shechinah dwelled in Gan Eden prior to the “cheit Eitz HaDa’as”; after the cheit, it left the garden. Here is the passage from the Midrash (Shir HaShirim Rabbah) related to the passuk (Shir HaShirim 5, 1):

“באתי לגני אחותי כלה... באתי לגן אין כתיב כאן אלא לגני - לגנוני, למקום שהיה עיקרי מתחילה, ועיקר שכינה לא בתחתונים היתה [בלשון שאלה], הדא הוא דכתיב (בראשית ג-ח) וישמעו את קול ה' אלקים מתהלך בגן, אמר רבי אבא מזהלך אין כתיב כאן אלא מתהלך, מקפץ וסליק, מקפץ וסליק.”

חטא אדם הראשון ונסתלקה השכינה לרקיע הראשון, חטא קין נסתלקה לרקיע השני, חטא אנוש נסתלקה לרקיע השלישי, חטא דור המבול נסתלקה לרקיע הרביעי, חטא דור המגדל נסתלקה לרקיע החמישי, חטאו אנשי סדום נסתלקה לרקיע הששי, חטאו המצריים בימי אברהם נסתלקה לרקיע השביעי.

כנגדן עמדו שבעה צדיקים והורידה לארץ, זכה אברהם הורידה משביעי לששי, עמד יצחק והורידה מששי לחמישי, עמד יעקב והורידה מחמישי לרביעי, עמד לוי והורידה מרביעי לשלישי, עמד קהת והורידה משלישי לשני, עמד עמרם והורידה משני לאחד שהוא ראשון, עמד משה והורידה לארץ... ואימת שרת שכינה עליה, ביום שהוקם המשכן שנאמר (במדבר ז-א) ויהי ביום כלות משה להקים את המשכן.”

The passuk states: “**I came to My garden, My sister, My bride.**” The passuk specifically emphasizes “**My garden,**” referring to my original, main dwelling place. When Adam HaRishon sinned, the Shechinah vacated this world and went up to the first firmament; when Kayin sinned It left for the second firmament; when Enosh sinned, It went to the third firmament; when the generation of flood sinned, It left for the fourth firmament; when the generation of the Tower sinned, It went to the fifth firmament; when the people of Sedom sinned, It left for the sixth firmament; when the Egyptians sinned in the times of Avraham, the Shechinah distanced Herself all the way to the seventh firmament.

Correspondingly, seven tzaddikim brought the Shechinah back down to earth, one firmament at a time. In order, they were Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Levi, Kehas, Amram and Moshe. Thus, on the day the Mishkan was inaugurated, the Shechinah finally returned to its original dwelling place on earth.

Thus, we learn from our blessed sages in the Midrash that beginning with Adam HaRishon’s sin, the situation deteriorated progressively from generation to generation; the Shechinah vacated one firmament after another, each time moving to the

next higher firmament. The Shechinah did not return to earth until Moshe Rabeinu eventually built the Mishkan as a dwelling place for the Shechinah. HKB”H expresses this fact to Yisrael with the words: **”באתי לגני אחותי כלה, My sister, My bride.** With the construction of the Mishkan, I returned to My garden—Gan Eden—where HKB”H’s Divine Presence dwelled at the time of creation. Subsequently, His Shechinah left on account of the “cheit Eitz HaDa’as”; now, with the completion of the Mishkan, HKB”H returned to His garden, to rest His Shechinah in Gan Eden, once more.

It appears that this sequence of events is explicit in the Tikunei Zohar (Introduction 13a): **”ותקונא דמשכנא הוה ציורא דעובדא: דבראשית וגנתא דעדן”**—the establishment of the Mishkan replicates the act of creation and Gan Eden. Additional substantiation for this incredible notion can be found in the teachings of the divine kabbalist Rabbi Avraham Azulai (the grandfather of the great Gaon Chida), ztz”l, zy”a, in Chesed L’Avraham. He teaches us that Gan Eden served as Adam HaRishon’s Beis HaMikdash, providing all his spiritual needs; while the rest of the world supplied his material needs. Here is what he writes:

”הענין כי בעת בריאת אדם הראשון היה בגן עדן, אמנם שאר העולם לא לחנם נברא, אלא היה אדם הראשון יוצא מהגן לצורך תשמיש הגוף וכל צרכיו, והיה הגן אליו כבית המקדש וכבית הכנסת להתפלל בו וכיוצא, וכבית המדרש לעסוק בתורה ולקיום המצות ולהתנבאות בשם ה', ושאר העולם לכל רכושו ולכל חייתו הגשמי.”

When Adam HaRishon was created, he was in Gan Eden. Nevertheless, the rest of the world was not created for naught. Adam HaRishon would leave the Gan for the sake of all his physical needs. The Gan served as his Beis HaMikdash, his beit-Kenesses to pray in and his beit-midrash to engage in Torah study, to perform mitzvos and to prophesy in the name of Hashem. The rest of the world contained his belongings and pertained to his physical, material existence.

The Two Keruvim at the Gates of Gan Eden

Based on what we have learned, we can begin to comprehend a fascinating idea presented in the Targum YoNasan on the passuk (Bereishis 3, 24): **”ויגרש את האדם וישכן מקדם לגן עדן את . . . and He drove the man out, and He stationed to the east of Gan Eden the Keruvim and the blade of the turning sword—to guard the path to the Eitz HaChaim.** Whereas Rashi explains that the Keruvim were angels of destruction, the Targum YoNasan

provides a different approach. He explains that the passuk is referring to the two Keruvim between which HKB”H rested His Shechinah. Here is a synopsis of his explanation:

According to the Targum YoNasan, the passuk--**”וישכן--מקדם לגן עדן את הכרובים”**—reveals that Gan Eden, the place from which HKB”H expelled Adam, was the place He had rested His Shechinah **”מקדם”**—even before creation, between the two Keruvim. He established Gan Eden for the tzaddikim to eat and enjoy the fruit of its trees, as their reward for studying Torah and performing the mitzvos in Olam HaZeh. He set up Gehinnom, represented by the double-edged sword, stationed at the gates of Gan Eden--**”ואת להט החרב המתהפכת”**—to keep the resham out until they underwent a purification process. The fiery sparks and coals of Gehinnom were designed to punish the resham, who had rebelled against Hashem and His Torah during their lifetimes. [Translator’s note: The word “kedem” can mean east or it can refer to an earlier time.]

Thus, we have evidence, clear as day, that even prior to creation, HKB”H’s Divine Presence dwelled in Gan Eden between the two Keruvim. Subsequently, however, in the aftermath of the “cheit Eitz HaDa’as,” the Shechinah vacated Gan Eden and relocated to the first firmament. Ultimately, when Moshe Rabeinu built the Mishkan, HKB”H rested His Shechinah, once again, between the two Keruvim. This coincides perfectly with the notion that the Mishkan was a representation of the primeval Gan Eden.

The Midrash (B.R. 15, 1) expounding on the passuk (Bereishis 2, 8) adds an amazing fact. It says that the cedars HKB”H planted in Gan Eden were special cedars for the sake of the Mishkan:

”ויטע ה' אלקים גן בעדן מקדם... הדא הוא דכתיב (תהלים קד-טז) ישבעו עצי ה' ארזי לבנון אשר נטע, אמר רבי חנינא קרני חגבים היו, ועקרן הקדוש ברוך הוא ושתלן בתוך גן עדן... אמר רבי יוחנן, לא היה העולם ראוי להשתמש בארזים, שלא נבראו אלא לצורך בית המקדש, הדא הוא דכתיב ישבעו עצי ה' ארזי לבנון, ואין לבנון אלא בית המקדש, המה דאת אמר (דברים ג-כה) ההר הטוב הזה והלבנון.”

”Hashem Elokim planted a garden in Eden to the east”
. . . Rabbi Chanina said: They resembled the horns of grasshoppers; HKB”H uprooted them and planted them in the midst of Gan Eden . . . Rabbi Yochanan said: The world was not worthy to make use of the cedars, for they were not created except for the sake of the Beis HaMikdash . . .

**Yaakov Avinu Wanted Avraham
to Have Part of the Credit
for the Dwelling of the Shechinah in the Mishkan**

Upon further reflection, we learned from the Midrash above that Avraham Avinu was the first person to bring the Shechinah back down toward earth—from the seventh firmament to the sixth firmament. The six tzaddikim that followed him brought the Shechinah down from firmament to firmament until the seventh tzaddik, Moshe Rabeinu, brought it down from the first firmament to earth by erecting the Mishkan—where HKB”H rested His Shechinah. Let us suggest that this is alluded to by the passuk: **“He planted an ‘eshel’ in Be’er Sheva.”** It is teaching us that Avraham served Hashem by bringing people closer to Him, so that the Shechinah would come back down to earth. The name **“Be’er Sheva”** informs us that Avraham brought it back from the seventh (“sheva”) firmament to the sixth.

We have now been enlightened and can better comprehend Yaakov Avinu’s profound intent. He went out of his way to cut down cedars that Avraham Avinu had planted to draw people closer to the Omnipresent—HaMakom—so that Yisrael would use it for the middle bar of the Mishkan. Now, in parshas Eikev

(Devarim 8, 1), Rashi teaches us in the name of a Midrash Aggadah: **A mitzvah is attributed exclusively to the one who completes it.** This means that the mitzvah would not have been attributed to Avraham, since he only began the process. Yet, in reality, it was in his merit that the tzaddikim who descended from him followed in his footsteps and completed the process of bringing the Shechinah back down to earth to dwell in the Mishkan.

Therefore, Yaakov Avinu cleverly cut down those cedars in Be’er Sheva for the middle bar of the Mishkan, so that Avraham Avinu would have a part in the completion of the process of returning the Shechinah to earth. Now, if we combine this fact with the teaching in the Midrash that HKB”H planted the cedars in Gan Eden for the sake of the Mishkan, we can conclude that the cedars planted by Avraham in Be’er Sheva were from the very same cedars, seeing as they were ultimately used for the middle bar of the Mishkan. This all ties together fantastically. Avraham initiated the tikun process to bring back the Shechinah that had originally dwelled in Gan Eden. There HKB”H had planted cedars for the Mishkan. Therefore, Yaakov retrieved those cedars prior to descending to Mitzrayim, so that they would be available for the all-important middle bar of the Mishkan.

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