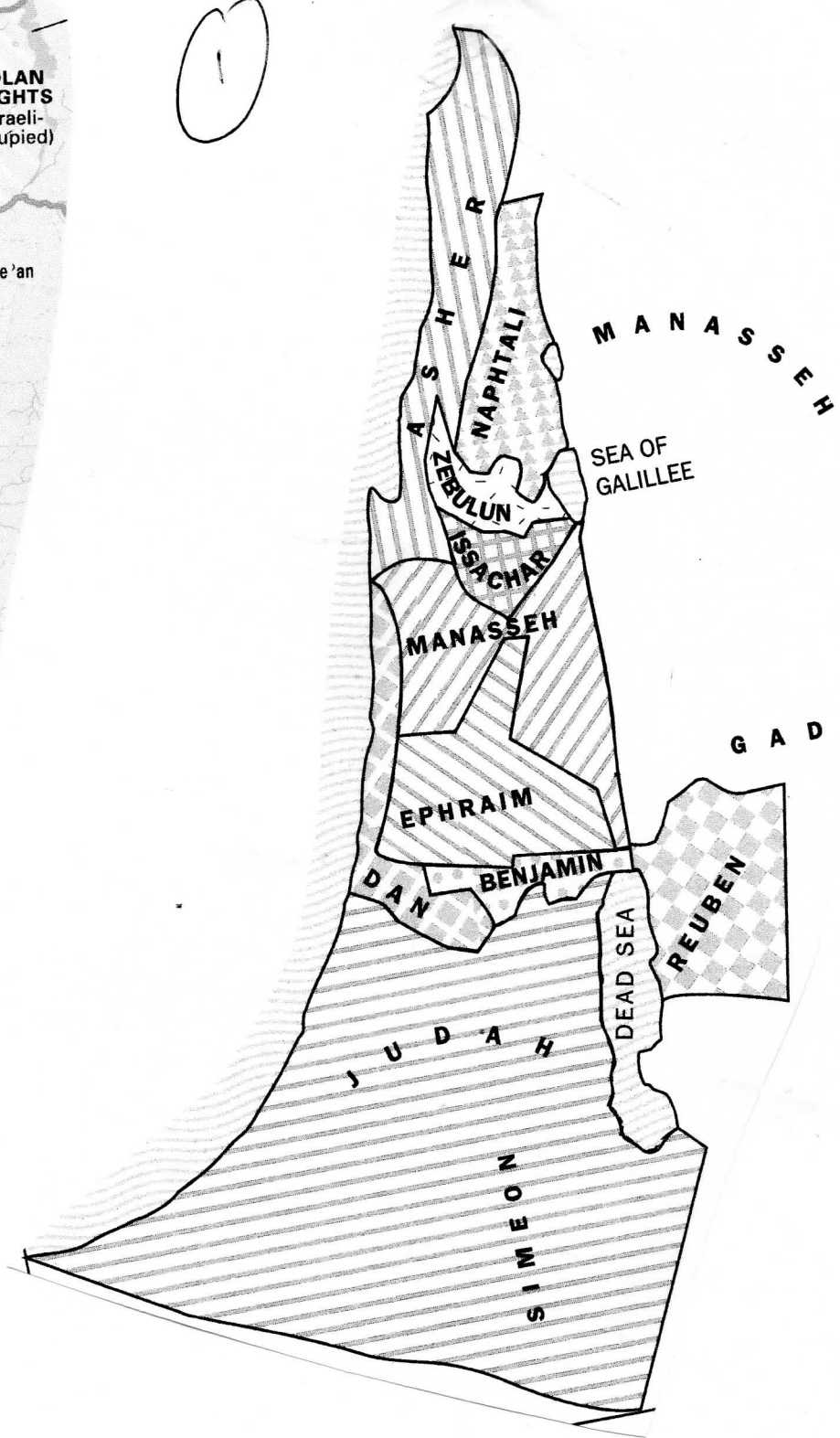




West Bank



East Bank

2

16 "Thus said the entire assembly of HASHEM: 'What is this treachery that you have committed against the God of Israel — to turn away from HASHEM this day, by building for yourselves an altar for your rebellion this day against HASHEM? 17 Is the sin of Peor not enough for us — from which we have not become cleansed until this day, and which resulted in the plague in the assembly of HASHEM? 18 Yet today you would turn away from HASHEM? If you rebel against HASHEM today, tomorrow He will be angry with the entire assembly of Israel. 19 But if the land of your possession is contaminated, cross over to the land of HASHEM's possession where the Sanctuary of HASHEM is, and take your possession among us; but do not rebel against HASHEM and do not rebel against us by building for yourselves an altar other than the Altar of HASHEM, our God. 20 Did not Achan son of Zerah commit treachery regarding the consecrated property, and wrath fell upon the entire assembly of Israel? That man was not the only one to perish for his sin!'"

21 The children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh responded

24 if we did not do this out of fear, saying [to ourselves]: In the future your children might say to our children, 'What have you to do with HASHEM the God of Israel? 25 HASHEM has established a border between us and you, O children of Reuben and children of Gad — the Jordan! You have no share in HASHEM!' So your children will cause our children to stop fearing HASHEM. 26 Therefore, we said, 'Let us do this for ourselves — to build the altar, not for elevation-offering and not for sacrifice, 27 but so that it will be a witness between us and you and our generations after us, to perform the service of HASHEM before Him with our elevation-offerings, and with our offerings and with our peace-offerings.' Then your children will not say to our children in the future, 'You have no share in HASHEM.'

22 תשובה

3

שלוש מתנות — A point of halachah was discussed:^[61] נבחרו עולם — Three gifts were created in the world: wisdom, strength, and wealth.^[62] — וזה באחת מהן נטל המדת כל העולם — He who has attained one of them has thereby acquired the most precious treasures of the entire world.^[63] וזה בהכמה — Thus, if he has attained wisdom, he has attained everything; וזה בגבורה — if he has attained strength, he has attained everything; וזה בעושר — and if he has attained wealth, he has attained everything.^[64] — אימתי — Now, when is this true? וזהו כח התורה — When they are gifts from Heaven and they are accompanied by the strength of the Torah.^[65] — אבל גבורתו ועשרו של בשר — However, the strength and wealth of a flesh and blood human being are worth nothing.^[66]

— ומתנות אלו בזמן שאינן באות מן הקדוש ברוך הוא סופן להפסק ממנו — And when these gifts do not originate from the Holy One, blessed is He,^[69] they will ultimately cease from being in [their owner's possession].

13

The Midrash mentions several Scriptural figures who possessed these qualities, but ultimately lost them because they were not properly utilized as gifts from Heaven:

שני חכמים עמדו בעולם — Our Rabbis have taught: שני רבתינו — Two wise men arose in the world, אחד מישראל ואחד — one among the people of Israel and the other one among the nations of the world: אחיתופל מישראל ובלעם — namely, Ahithophel among the people of Israel^[70] and Balaam among the nations of the world; ושניהם נאבדו מן העולם — and both of them were eradicated from the world.^[71] Similarly, two strong men arose in the world, אחד מישראל ואחד מאומות העולם — one among the people of Israel and the other one among the nations of the world: שמשון מישראל וגלית מאומות העולם — namely, Samson among the people of Israel, and Goliath among the nations of the world; ושניהם נאבדו מן העולם.^[72] Likewise, two rich men arose in the world, אחד מישראל ואחד מאומות העולם — one among the people of Israel and the other one among the nations of the world: קרח מישראל והמן — namely, Korah among the people of Israel,^[73] and Haman among the nations of the world;^[74] ושניהם נאבדו מן העולם — and both of them were eradicated from the world.

שלא — And why were they all eradicated from the world? — היה מתנתן מן הקדוש ברוך הוא — Because their gifts were not from the Holy One, blessed is He, — חוטפין אותה להם — rather they "snatched" it for themselves.^[75]

The Midrash connects its discussion to our passage: — וכן אתה מוצא בבני גד ובני ראובן — And you find similarly regarding the children of Gad and the children of Reuben, שהיו עשירים והיה להם מקנה גדול וחבבו את ממונם וישבו להם חוץ מארץ — that they were wealthy and possessed abundant livestock; and because they treasured their money, they settled outside of the Land of Israel proper.^[76] לפיכך גלו תחלה מכל שבט — Therefore, they were the first of all the tribes to be exiled by the Assyrians, ויגלם לראובני ולגדי ולחצי שבט — as it is stated, And he (the king of Assyria) led away the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh into exile (I Chronicles 5:26).^[77] — ומי גרם להם — And what caused this to befall them? על שהפרישו עצמם מן אחיהם בשביל — It happened because they separated themselves from their brethren on account of their possessions.^[78] — מנין — From where do we know that they did this? ממה שקתוב בתורה — From that which is written in the Torah, The children of Reuben and the children of Gad had abundant livestock, etc.^[79]

Midrash Raba Bamidbar 22:7

4

באותה ארץ, אבל בשחלק הארץ לשני השבטים, ראה שהיא ארץ גדולה יותר מן הראוי להם, ובקש

גד וראובן, אך הכתוב לא הוסיף לפי שהיו רק חצי שבט. (אבן עזרא) ב. תחלה לא שאלו שבט מנשה חלק

מדוע מזכיר חצי שבט מנשה שלא בקשו ירשה בעבר הירדן? א. חצי שבט מנשה בקשו יחד עם בני

מנשה 22:7

אנשים שירצו להתנחל עמקם, ואנשים משבט מנשה רצו בה, ונתן להם חלקם. (רמב"ן)

ג. משה נתן שם את חצי שבט המנשה, כדי שלא תשתכח שם האחרונה, ויאמרו להם אין אתם אדונינו, ולכן חלק את השבט. (ש"ר)

5

§20 — THEN JACOB RENT HIS GARMENTS. — ויקרע יעקב שמלתיו

The Midrash takes up the theme that no anguish inflicted by one person on another goes unrequited:

ר' פינחס בשם רבי הושעיה אמר — R' Pinchas said in the name of R' Hoshayah: — שבטים גרמו לאביהם לקרוע — The progenitors of the tribes (i.e., Joseph's brothers) caused their father to rend his garments; — והיכן נפרע להם — where, then, were they repaid measure for measure?^[255] במצרים, שנאמר "ויקרעו שמלתם" — In Egypt, as it is stated, They rent their garments, etc.^[256] (below, 44:13).

— ויסקה גרם לשבטים לקרוע — Joseph caused the progenitors of the twelve tribes (i.e., his brothers) to rend their garments;^[257] — כן בנו ונפרע לו — his descendant therefore stood to be repaid in kind, — שנאמר "ויקרע הושעיה שמלתיו" — as it is stated, Joshua tore his garments (Joshua 7:6).^[258]

— בנימין גרם לשבטים לקרוע — Benjamin, too, caused the progenitors of the twelve tribes (i.e., his brothers) to rend their garments;^[259] — היכן נפרע לו — where, then, was he repaid in kind? — הבירה, שנאמר "ויקרע מרדכי את בגדיו" — In Shushan the capital, as it is stated, and Mordechai tore his clothes (Esther 4:1).^[260]

— מנשה גרם לשבטים לקרוע — Lastly, Joseph's son Manasseh caused the progenitors of the twelve tribes (i.e., Joseph's brothers) to rend their garments.^[261] — לפיכך נתקרעה נחלתו — Accordingly, his territorial inheritance was torn apart, חצייה בארץ — half of it being in the land of the Jordan River (i.e., Transjordan) and half of it in the land of Canaan.^[262]

Berish's Raba 84:20