



ויקחו את לוט ואת 14:12
רכשו בן אחי אברם, וילכו
והוא יושב בסדום

“And they took Lot and his possessions, the son of Avrohom’s brother, and departed – for he had settled in Sodom.” The Torah identifies who Lot is only after it speaks about his possessions. Shouldn’t the Posuk have said, “לוט בן אחי אברם” – first telling us who Lot is, and then add, “ואת רכשו” instead of what the Posuk says, “את לוט”? The following Divrei Torah will expound on this topic and support the P’shat offered in the closing paragraph.

ויקחו את לוט ואת 14:12 - **אור החיים**
– **“רכשו בן אחי אברם, וילכו והוא יושב בסדום**
“And they took Lot and his possessions, the son of Avrohom’s brother, and departed – for he had settled in Sodom.” The Torah identifies who Lot is only after it speaks about his possessions. Shouldn’t the Posuk have said, “לוט בן אחי אברם” – first telling us who Lot is, and then add, “ואת רכשו” instead of what the Posuk says, “את לוט ואת רכשו בן אחי אברם”? Additionally, why does the Posuk tell us that he was settled in Sodom when we already know that? The Torah is telling us that the kings knew that this person named Lot was Avrohom’s nephew. Nevertheless, they took him as a prisoner and led him away to captivity. Why did the kings take Lot, Avrohom’s nephew, and were not concerned about Avrohom’s honor, even though he was respected and exalted in the eyes of the entire world? The Torah tells us that the answer to this question is, “והוא יושב בסדום” – for he was residing in Sodom, the kingdom which had rebelled against them. He was a citizen of the city which waged war against them and they felt they were permitted and justified in taking Lot captive, despite his being Avrohom’s nephew. Based on this, we can explain why Avrohom went straight to battle with the four kings, and didn’t try a peaceful route of freeing Lot. Avrohom didn’t even seek to speak to the kings to see if they would be willing to let Lot go free, for as the Posuk says, “וישמע” – Avrohom heard that “אברם...כי נשבה אחיו” – his brother was captured. It wasn’t that he heard that Lot was

captured, rather it was known to the kings that they had captured Avrohom’s brother, Lot. By doing this, the kings were demonstrating that they were enemies of Avrohom, and he therefore pursued and attacked them without offering them the opportunity to return Lot peacefully.

ויקחו את לוט 14:12 – **חכמת התורה**
– **“ואת רכשו בן אחי אברם, וילכו והוא יושב בסדום**
“And they took Lot and his possessions, the son of Avrohom’s brother, and departed – for he had settled in Sodom.” The Torah identifies who Lot is only after it speaks about his possessions. Shouldn’t the Posuk have said, “לוט בן אחי אברם” – first telling us who Lot is, and then adding, “ואת רכשו” as opposed to the way the Posuk says it, “את לוט ואת רכשו בן אחי אברם”? Additionally, why does the Posuk tell us that he was settled in Sodom when we already know that? The Midrash tells us that the four kings were going specifically after Lot, the nephew of Avrohom. This is difficult to understand, why would Lot be captured – punished because of the righteous Avrohom? It would seem to make more sense that he should have been protected and not harmed in the Zechus of Avrohom Avinu. The Torah answers this and tells us, “והוא יושב בסדום” – it was because Lot resided in Sodom. He made himself part of Sodom, and they were all deserving of punishment. He was part of them, and thus needed to be punished along with them. As the Gemara on Bava Kamma 90a says, “אוי לרשע אוי לשיכניו” – “Woe to the wicked, and woe to his neighbor” – even if one is not wicked, but is the neighbor of the wicked, he will be punished along with the wicked. That is why the Zechus of Avrohom did not help. He was part of Sodom and thus needed to be punished with them. The Torah tells us that they took Lot and his possessions. Why did they do so? “בן אחי אברהם” – For he was the nephew of Avrohom. If one will ask, but if anything, he should have been saved because of Avrohom? To this the Posuk answers, “והוא יושב בסדום” – he resided in Sodom and needed to be punished along with them. The Shelah Hakodosh in Parshas Bechukosai explains why in the middle of the Tochacha, the Torah says, “זכרתי את

– “בריתי יעקב” – that the punishment is worse for Klal Yisroel for they are descendants from the holy Yaakov Avinu. When one comes from Tzaddikim, and is raised in a proper Jewish home, it is much worse if he goes on the evil path, than one who may not know better. Lot was with his family, the righteous Avrohom Avinu. Had he come from a random family, his punishment would not have been so harsh. However, he was the nephew of the Tzaddik Avrohom Avinu, and he chose to flee from him and attach himself to the wicked people of Sodom.

ויקחו את לוט ואת 14:12 - **ספורנו**
– **“רכשו בן אחי אברם, וילכו והוא יושב בסדום**
“And they took Lot and his possessions, the son of Avrohom’s brother, and departed – for he had settled in Sodom.” The Torah identifies who Lot is only after it speaks about his possessions. Shouldn’t the Posuk have said, “לוט בן אחי אברם” – first telling us who Lot is, and then add, “ואת רכשו”? The kings specifically sought to capture Lot, because he was Avrohom’s nephew. They knew of Avrohom’s great wealth, and they hoped to receive a huge ransom to return Lot to him. Thus, the Posuk tells us of the **רכשו**, that the value in Lot for the kings was, **בן אחי אברם**, that he was Avrohom’s nephew.

ויקחו 14:12 - **ר' שמשון רפאל הירש**
את לוט ואת רכשו בן אחי אברם, וילכו והוא יושב בסדום
– “And they took Lot and his possessions, the son of Avrohom’s brother, and departed – for he had settled in Sodom.” The Torah identifies who Lot is only after it speaks about his possessions. Shouldn’t the Posuk have said, “לוט בן אחי אברם” – first telling us who Lot is, and then add, “ואת רכשו” as opposed to the way the Posuk says it, “את לוט ואת רכשו בן אחי אברם”? From previous chapters we already know that Lot was the son of Avrohom’s brother, and that Lot lived in Sodom. Hence, there must be some reason why these facts are repeated here.

Lot was not a native of Sodom. When he first arrived to Sodom, he was known as the son of Avrohom’s brother. Had he maintained that identity, he would have been spared from captivity. Even though he lived close to the battlefield, as a stranger in the land he

could have been spared from the revenge of כדרלעומר. (This is the famous battle of the four kings versus the five kings – the four kings were coming for revenge – כדרלעומר leading the charge). However, Lot had become a resident of Sodom; he had rights of citizenship there, and so he had to suffer along with the others. Herein lies a warning to the members of Avrohom's family, a warning that has been borne out by centuries of Jewish history. One who remains true to his calling and destiny as a Jew will have to make many sacrifices; on the other hand, he will be spared much trouble, for he will be carried upon the כנפי השכינה, the wings of the Shechinah.

The ghettos that isolated us worked not only to our disadvantage, but also to our advantage. Those who lived within the ghetto walls were shielded from many evils to which those outside fell victim during the Middle Ages. Jews were not considered good enough to become judges or law-enforcement officials, or to join the entourages of knights. They were not permitted to participate in tournaments, and they took no part in world affairs. But neither did they have a part in the torturing, slaughtering, strangling or the incineration of their fellow men. They were often the victims, but never the victimizers. Their hands were not stained with human blood, and when fate caught up with the emperors and their armies, the Jews remained safe in their ghettos. They should be happy that they were called to the arena of world affairs only now when the nations of the worlds are at least trying to act justly and humanely. People who are wholly absorbed in their material desires do not learn from their experience. Lot should have learned from his experience, and henceforth avoided the people of Sodom. Nevertheless, when the final catastrophe struck, Lot was still there in Sodom.

ויקחו את לוט - 14:12 - זוהר הקדוש
“ואת רכשו בן אחי אברם, וילכו והוא יושב בסדום
 – “And they took Lot and his possessions, the son of Avrohom's brother, and departed – for he had settled in Sodom.” It was known to all that Lot was the nephew of Avrohom. The kings captured

Lot for they were going after Avrohom. They thought that capturing Lot would cause Avrohom to come attack them, and then they would defeat Avrohom. The reason that the kings wanted to obliterate Avrohom Avinu was because he weaned people away from Avodah Zarah and instead taught them to serve Hashem. Additionally, Hakodosh Boruch Hu wanted Avrohom's name to be truly great in the world, and his defeating the powerful four kings accomplished that. The four kings sought to destroy Avrohom Avinu so that he would not turn more people away from Avodah Zarah and turn them to Hashem – and their very action of capturing Lot did the exact opposite. Avrohom Avinu saved Lot, and made his name, and thus the Name of Hashem, even greater in this world. All knew that Avrohom Avinu was a staunch follower of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, and thus his defeating the four kings strengthened people's Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu, the only true G-d in the world.

ויקחו את “14:12 – מעין בית השואבה
לוט ואת רכשו בן אחי אברם, וילכו והוא יושב
בסדום – “And they took Lot and his possessions, the son of Avrohom's brother, and departed – for he had settled in Sodom.” The Torah identifies who Lot is only after it speaks about his possessions. Shouldn't the Posuk have said, “לוט בן אחי אברם” – first telling us who Lot is, and then add, “ואת רכשו” as opposed to the way the Posuk says it, “את לוט ואת רכשו בן אחי אברם”?

This Posuk alludes to the root source of the downfall of Lot. The Torah seems to tell us of the great Aliyah, uplifting, that Lot had, and then his great Nefilah, downfall, though without explicitly telling us the reason for it. Initially Lot left Charan with Avrohom. Lot's father, Haran, was Moser Nefesh Al Kiddush Hashem, he sacrificed his life in the כבשן האש, when he would not bow down to Avodah Zarah. Lot took after his father and was a Talmid of Avrohom Avinu. He went where Avrohom did when there was a famine, and did not reveal to Paroah that Avrohom was the husband of Sarah when they tried to hide it.

Rashi in Vayeira 20:29 says that it was in the Zechus that he did not reveal

their secret that he was Zoche to be saved when Sodom was turned over. Lot was like a brother to Avrohom, as the Posuk says in 13:8 “כי אנשים אחים אנוח” – What was the turning point that Lot become a Rasha, as the Posuk in 13:14 says, “וד” – “אמר אל אברם אחי הפך לוט מעמו” – that Hashem spoke to Avrohom after Lot left him – and Rashi says that as long as the evil Lot was with Avrohom, Hashem wouldn't speak to Avrohom. The Torah tells us here what caused this major change in Lot – “ויקחו את לוט – ואת רכשו” – “את רכשו” – his possessions were what got between Lot and Avrohom – that was what caused the dramatic turnaround of Lot being a faithful Talmid of Avrohom Avinu, a virtuous individual, to becoming a Rasha. Lot became wealthy, and began to chase after all of his desires. Lot became rich, and said that he no longer needed Avrohom or his G-d. He was wealthy enough, self-sufficient, and had no need for guidance of any sort. We need to be careful not to chase after wealth, for look what it can do to a person.

Now we can understand why the Torah placed, “רכשו” – Lot's possessions, between Lot and telling us that he was a nephew of Avrohom Avinu. It was the רכשו, the physical possessions, that caused there to be a separation between Avrohom and Lot. There is a great lesson for us to learn from this. Lot had the opportunity to be close to a great Tzaddik. Not just a great Tzaddik, but to Avrohom Avinu. What a shame; he blew it. He could have elevated himself to great levels of Ruchniyos, but he let his desire for money, for possessions, to separate him from Avrohom Avinu. Instead of focusing on what is important in this world, he got caught up with materialism. How sad, that he gave up what is important for the silly temporary pleasures of this world. Let us imbue this lesson within ourselves, not to get caught up with the rat race of attaining possessions but focus on what is really important. If one has the opportunity to attach himself to a Gadol, it is something very worthwhile. May we be Zoche to keep the correct focus – to focus on what really matters in this world – Ruchniyos.