

Jacob's Sabbath Boundary

Sources: DBS Torah CD Rom Library, Otzar HaChochma, Chabad.org, Soncino Talmud

Following his encounter with his brother Esav,
Ya'akov arrives at Shechem

Source #1a: Bereishis Ch. 33

ויחן את פני העיר: (יט) ויקן את חלקת השדה אשר נטה שם אהלו מיד בני חמור אבי שכם במאה קשיטה: (כ) ויצב שם מזבח ויקרא לו אל אלהי ישראל:

18. And Jacob came safely [to] the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan aram, and he encamped before the city.
19. And he bought the part of the field where he had pitched his tent from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred kesitas. 20. There he erected an altar, and he named it "God is the God of Israel."

Now, there are a number of attempts to explain what the outlined phrase above means. Ramban (Nachmanides) says:

1b)

ויחן את פני העיר – לא רצה להיות אכסנאי בעיר, אבל רצה שתהיה תחילת ביאתו בארץ בתוך שלו, ולכן חנה בשדה וקנה המקום...

He didn't want to be a guest in the city; rather, he wished his initial contact with the Land to be on his own property. Therefore, he encamped in a field and acquired his own property.

1c) Chizkuni's commentary

ויחן את פני העיר – לפי שהיה רכושו רב ונוח לו לעמוד חוץ לעיר.

Since he had so many possessions, it was more convenient for him to stand (ie set up camp) outside the city.

1d) Commentary of the Ba'alei HaTosafos

ויחן את פני העיר. שנכנס לעיר עם דמדומי חמה וקבע תחומין:

He entered the city with the last flicker of daylight and set up techumin (boundaries)

What is the basis of this last view of the Tosafos?
Says modern-day schola, Rabbi Chaim Sternberg in his work,
“Mishnas Chaim”

Source #2:

א. ויבא יעקב שלם עיר שכם וגו' ויחן
את פני העיר = בראשית לג-
יח. ובב"ר (סוף עט-ו) נכנס בערב שבת
עם דמדומי חמה מבעוד יום וקבע
תחומין מבעוד יום, הדא אמרה ששמר
יעקב את השבת קודם שנתן. ופי' בעץ
יוסף שכבר הגיע דמדומי חמה בהיותו
במגרש העיר ולא הגיע לעיר, וקבע שם
תחומין לקנות שביתה ללכת אלפיים
אמה לכל רוח.

Tosafos' view is based on Midrash Bereishis Rabba 11:7

Source #3a:

(ז) ר' יוחנן בשם ר' יוסי בר חלפתא אמר **אברהם** שאין כתוב בו שמירת
שבת **ירש את העולם במדה** שנאמר (בראשית יב) "קום התהלך בארץ
לארכה ולרחבה וגו'" **אבל יעקב** שכתוב בו שמירת שבת שנאמר (שם לג)
"ויחן את פני העיר" - נכנס עם דמדומי חמה וקבע תחומין מבעוד יום.
ירש את העולם שלא במדה שנאמר (שם כח)
שנאמר (שם כח) והיה זרעך כעפר הארץ וגו'

R. Yochanan in the name of R. Yosi Bar Chalaftah said, Avraham, regarding whom there is no mention of Shabbos observance, inherited the world according to specific measurements, as it says (Bereishis 12) "Arise and walk in the Land – its length and width – because I am giving it to you." But Ya'akov, regarding whom there is a mention of Shabbos observance, as it says (Bereishis 33) "And he encamped before the city" - he entered with the last flickers of light and set up boundaries while it was still daytime – he inherited the world without specific measurements, as it says (Bereishis 28) "And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth etc."

The verses referred to by the midrash:

3b) Bereishis Ch. 13

(יז) קום הַתְּהַלֵּךְ בָּאָרֶץ לְאַרְפָּה וּלְרַחֲבָה פִּי לְךָ אֶתְנַנֶּה:

17. Rise, walk in the land, to its length and to its breadth, for I will give it to you."

3c) Bereishis Ch. 28

(יד) וְהָיָה זֶרְעֶךָ כַּעֲפַר הָאָרֶץ וּפְרֻצַת יָמָה וּקְדָמָה וּצְפֹנָה וְנִגְבָּה וְנִבְרָכוּ בְךָ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחַת הָאֲדָמָה וּבְזֶרְעֶךָ:

14. And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and you shall gain strength westward and eastward and northward and southward; and through you shall be blessed all the families of the earth and through your seed.

Source #4a: Commentary of Meshech Chochma on the Parsha

והציור בזה. דבאמת כמו שלהחי די במזון מהצומח והמדבר ניוון מהחי כן נפש המשכלת מבני נכר די לו בשבע מצות אולם נפש הישראלי מקורו ממקום גבוה חלק ד' ממעל אם אין לו כל התורה בכללה ופרטה אז אינו בחיותו. כי עם הישראלי המה מעון ומכון לאלקות בעולם השפל ואין השכינה שורה אלא באלפי רבבות ישראל (יבמות סד).....ולכן אברהם חפש להפיץ שיטתו ודיעותיו באלקות לכל באי עולם באשר חשב כי הוא יחידי ואח"כ ראה כי ישמעאל יצא ממנו ולכן נטע אשל להכניס כל באי עולם לברית ואמרו בריש עו"ג (דף ט) שני אלפים תורה מ"והנפש אשר עשו בחרן" דשעבידו לאורייתא. וגם היה זה בכוונה שהלך למצרים מקום החכמה והחרטומים לפלפל ולקרבתם לשיטותיו באחדות ובתורה.

.. indeed, just as some animals can be sustained on vegetation alone, and talking (human) beings are sustained by eating meat, so too, the intellectual soul of the non-Jewish nations is sustained by the Seven Mitzvos of the Sons of Noach. The Jewish soul, however, has its root in a very lofty place; if it does not have the entire Torah – in all of its rules and details – he is not being fully sustained. Because the Jewish nation is a dwelling place for G-dliness in this lowly world; and the Shechina (Divine Presence) does not dwell on less than tens of thousands of Jewish people....**Therefore, Avraham sought to disseminate his views about G-d to all the people of the world because he perceived himself as being alone. Then he saw that Yishmael descended from him. Therefore he decided to plant an eishel as a way of bringing all people into the covenant** – The Gemara in Tractate Avoda Zara cites the verse “..and the souls that they acquired in Haran.” – that he humbled these souls to the Torah. This is also the reason that he went to Mitzraim, the place of wisdom and sorcery to engage them in dialogue and bring them closer to his approach in the Oneness of G-d and to Torah.

What connection does Meshech Chochma make between the behavior of Yishma'el and Avraham's outreach agenda?

The sources: 4b) Bereishis Ch. 21

(לג) וַיִּטַע אֵשֶׁל בְּבֵאֵר שֶׁבַע וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם בְּשֵׁם ה' אֵל עוֹלָם:

33. And he planted an eishel in Beer-Sheba, and he called there in the name of the Lord, the God of the world.

4c) Rashi

אשל - רב ושמואל חד אמר פרדס להביא ממנו פירות לאורחים בסעודה. וחד אמר פונדק לאכסניא ובו כל מיני פירות. ומצינו לשון נטיעה באהלים שנאמר (דניאל יא) ויטע אהלי אפדנו: **ויקרא שם וגו'** - על ידי אותו אשל נקרא שמו של הקב"ה אלוהי כלל העולם לאחר שאוכלים ושותים אמר להם ברכו למי שאכלתם משלו סבורים אתם שמשלי אכלתם משל מי שאמר והיה העולם אכלתם (סוטה י):

33. **an eishel.** Heb. אֵשֶׁל [There is a dispute between] Rav and Samuel. One says that it was an orchard from which to bring fruits for the guests at the meal, and one says that it was an inn for lodging, in which there were all sorts of fruits. We find the expression of planting (נְטִיעָה) used in conjunction with tents, as it is written (Dan. 11:45): "And he will pitch (וַיִּטַע) his palatial tents." - [from Sotah 10a, *Gen. Rabbah* 54:6] **and he called there, etc.** By means of that "eishel", **the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, was called "God of the whole world."** After they would eat and drink, he would say to them, "Bless the One of Whose [food] you have eaten. Do you think that you have eaten of my [food]? [You have eaten of the food] of the One Who spoke and the world came into being!" - [from Sotah 10a, *Gen. Rabbah* 54:6]

4d) Bereishis Ch. 12

(ה) וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת שָׂרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת לוֹט בֶּן אָחִיו וְאֶת כָּל רְכוּשׁ אֲשֶׁר רָכְשׁוּ וְאֶת הַנַּפְשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן וַיֵּצְאוּ לְלֶכֶת אֶרְצָה כְּנָעַן וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶרְצָה כְּנָעַן:

5. And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had acquired, **and the souls they had acquired in Haran**, and they went to go to the land of Canaan, and they came to the land of Canaan.

4e) Rashi

(ה) **אשר עשו בחרן** - שהכניסן תחת כנפי השכינה אברהם מגייר את האנשים ושרה מגיירת הנשים ומעלה עליהם הכתוב כאלו עשאום (לכך כתיב אשר עשו) ופשוטו של מקרא עבדים ושפחות שקנו להם כמו (שם לא) עשה את כל הכבוד הזה (לשון קנין) (במדבר כד) וישראל עושה חיל לשון קונה וכונס:

5. **and the souls they had acquired in Haran, whom he had brought under the wings of the Shechinah.** Abraham would convert the men, and Sarah would convert the women, and Scripture ascribes to them [a merit] as if they had made them (*Gen. Rabbah* 39:14). (Hence, the expression אשר עשו, lit. that they made.) The simple meaning of the verse is: the slaves and maidservants that they had acquired for themselves, as in [the verse] (below 31:1): He acquired (עָשָׂה) all this wealth [an expression of acquisition]; (Num. 24:18): and Israel acquires an expression of acquiring and gathering.

Source #5: Meshech Chochmah continued

....לא כן יעקב ראה שמטתו שלמה (ויקרא רבה לו-ד) ובזרעו די שיהיו מעון ומרכבה לשכינה וכמו שהבטיחו וראה ש"ה' נצב עליו" ראה להיפוך כי בניו יהיו נפרדים מעמים אחרים מוגבלים בתחום ואף ללבן חותנו הניחו בטעותו וכעס על רחל שגנבה התרפים להבדילו מעו"ג כן במצרים היו יושבים בארץ גושן נפרדים מהעמים. וכן לדורות באומה אין מקבלין גרים בימי דוד ושלמה (יבמות כד:) שזה כהכרח או למקנא לגדולתם וזה מליצתם שאברהם קיים עירובי תבשילין (יומא כח:) להכניס אורחים ולקבל גרים תחת כנפי השכינה אבל לא קבע תחומין שמא ימנע אחד מלבוא לשמוע דיעותיו. לא כן יעקב קבע תחומין להגביל ולתחום בין עם ישראל לעמים.

This was not so by Ya'akov, who saw that **"his bed was complete"** – ie that his offspring were on a high enough spiritual level to be a dwelling place for the Shechina, as G-d had promised him.... **He took the opposite approach to that of Avraham – that his children would be separate from other nations, within a boundary. He even let his father-in-law Lavan hold on to his mistaken beliefs;** Ya'akov even got angry at Rachel for stealing her father's idols (in an effort to keep him away from idolatry) So too, in Egypt, they dwelt in the Land of Goshen, separate from the nations. And so, too, for generations, this nation did not accept converts - during the time of King David and Shlomo.. Our sages use the expression that Avraham performed "Eruv Tavshilin) **to bring in guests and converts under the wings of the Divine Presence, but he did not establish Shabbos boundaries – lest someone refrain from coming to hear his teachings. This is not true of Ya'akov, who created boundaries to separate between the Jewish people and the other nations.**

Source #6: Sefer Yeshaya (Isaiah) Ch. 58

13. If you restrain your foot because of the Sabbath, from performing your affairs on My holy day, and you call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honored, and you honor it by not doing your wonted ways, by not pursuing your affairs and speaking words.

14. Then, you shall delight with the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the high places of the land, **and I will give you to eat the heritage of Jacob your father**, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Source #7: Talmud, Shabbos, 188b

R. Yohanan said in R. Yosi's name: **He who delights in the Sabbath is given an unbounded heritage**, for it is written, Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will make thee to ride upon the high places of the earth; and I will feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, etc.¹ Not like Abraham, of whom it is written, Arise, walk through the land in the length of it, etc.;² nor like Isaac of whom it is written, for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these lands, etc.;³ **but like Jacob, of whom it is written, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south.**⁴

Source #8a: Korach's Rebellion –
What was it all about? Bamidbar Ch. 16

(א) וַיִּקַּח קֹרַח בֶּן יִצְחָר בֶּן קֹהַת בֶּן לֵוִי וְדָתָן וְאַבִּירָם בְּנֵי אֱלִיאָב וְאוֹן בֶּן פֶּלֶת בְּנֵי רְאוּבֵן : (ב) וַיִּקְמוּ לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה וְאַנְשֵׁים מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲמִשִּׁים וּמְאַתָּים נְשִׂאֵי עֵדָה קְרָאִי מוֹעֵד אֲנָשֵׁי שָׁם : (ג) וַיִּקְהָלוּ עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל אֶהֱרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֲלֵהֶם רַב לָכֶם כִּי כָל הָעֵדָה כֻּלָּם קֳדָשִׁים וּבְתוֹכְכֶם ה' וּמִדּוּעַ תִּתְנַשְּׂאוּ עַל קֹהַל ה' : (ד) וַיִּשְׁמַע מֹשֶׁה וַיִּפֹּל עַל פָּנָיו : (ה) וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל קֹרַח וְאֶל כָּל עֵדָתוֹ לֵאמֹר בִּקֶּר וַיַּדַּע ה' אֶת אֲשֶׁר לוֹ וְאֶת הַקְּדוֹשׁ וַהֲקָרִיב אֵלָיו וְאֶת אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר בּוֹ וַיִּקְרִיב אֵלָיו :

- 1.** Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi took [himself to one side] along with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, descendants of Reuben. **2.** They confronted Moses together with two hundred and fifty men from the children of Israel, chieftains of the congregation, representatives of the assembly, men of repute.
- 3.** They assembled against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves, **for the entire congregation are all holy, and the Lord is in their midst.** So why do raise yourselves above the Lord's assembly?"
- 4.** Moses heard and fell on his face.
- 5. He spoke to Korah and to all his company, saying, "In the morning, the Lord will make known who is His, and who is holy, and He will draw [them] near to Him, and the one He chooses, He will draw near to Him.**

8b) Rashi

The Midrashic interpretation of בִּקֶּר, *morning*, [rather than מָחָר, *tomorrow*] is: Moses said to him [Korah], The Holy One, blessed is He, assigned boundaries to His world. Are you able to transform morning into evening? That is how possible it is for you to undo this, as it says, "It was evening and it was morning... and He separated (וַיַּבְדֵּל) " (Gen. 1:5, 7); similarly, "Aaron was set apart (וַיַּבְדֵּל) to sanctify him..." (I Chron. 23:13). - [*Midrash Tanchuma Korach 3, Num. Rabbah 4*]

וְלִלְוִי

He dressed them with cloaks made entirely of blue wool. They came and stood before Moses and asked him, "Does a cloak made entirely of blue wool require fringes [‘tzitzith’], or is it exempt?" He replied, " It does require [fringes]." They began laughing at him [saying], "Is it possible that a cloak of another [colored] material, one string of blue wool exempts it [from the obligation of *techeleth*], and this one, which is made entirely of blue wool, should not exempt itself? - [*Midrash Tanchuma Korach 2, Num. Rabbah 18:3*] descendants of Reuben. Dathan and Abiram and On the son of Peleth.

Source #9: The Aleinu prayer

עֲלֵינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל. לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית. שְׁלֹא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי
הָאֲרָצוֹת. וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ כְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאֲדָמָה. שְׁלֹא שָׁם חִלְקֵנוּ כְּהֵם וְגוֹרְלָנוּ כְּכָל
הַמּוֹנִים: שֶׁהֵם מִשְׁתַּחֲוִים לְהֵבֶל וְרִיק וּמִתְפַּלְלִים אֶל אֵל לֹא יוֹשִׁיעַ:
וְאִנְחָנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ
הוּא: שֶׁהוּא נוֹטֵה שָׁמַיִם וְיוֹסֵד אֶרֶץ. וּמוֹשֵׁב יְקָרוֹ בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל. וְשֹׁכֵנֵת
עִזוֹ בְּגִבְהַי מְרוֹמִים: הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵין עוֹד. אֲמַת מַלְכָּנוּ. אֲפֹס זוֹלָתוֹ. כְּפָתוּב
בְּתוֹרָתוֹ. וַיִּדְעַת הַיּוֹם וְהִשְׁבַּת אֶל לְבַבְךָ. כִּי ה' הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים בְּשָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל
וְעַל הָאֶרֶץ מִתַּחַת. אֵין עוֹד:

עַל כֵּן נִקְוֶה לְךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְרֵאוֹת מִהֲרָה בְּתַפְאֶרֶת עֲזֶךָ. לְהַעֲבִיר גְּלוּלִים מִן
הָאֶרֶץ. וְהַאֲלִילִים כָּרוֹת יִכְרְתוּן. לְתַקֵּן עוֹלָם בְּמַלְכוּת שְׁדֵי. וְכָל בְּנֵי בְּשָׂר
יִקְרְאוּ בְּשִׁמְךָ לְהַפְנוֹת אֶלֶיךָ כָּל רִשְׁעֵי אֶרֶץ. יִכִּירוּ וַיִּדְעוּ כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֶל. כִּי
לְךָ תִכְרַע כָּל בָּרֶךְ. תִּשָּׁבַע כָּל לְשׁוֹן. לְפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ יִכְרְעוּ וַיִּפְּלוּ. וְלִכְבוֹד
שִׁמְךָ יִקָּר יִתְנוּ. וַיִּקְבְּלוּ כָּלֵם אֶת עַל מַלְכוּתְךָ. וְתִמְלֹךְ עֲלֵיהֶם מִהֲרָה לְעוֹלָם
וָעֵד. כִּי הַמַּלְכוּת שֶׁלְּךָ הִיא וְלְעוֹלָמֵי עַד תִּמְלֹךְ בְּכָבוֹד. כְּפָתוּב בְּתוֹרָתְךָ. ה'
יִמְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֵד: וַיִּאָּמֶר. וְהָיָה ה' לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאֶרֶץ. בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה ה'
אֶחָד וְשִׁמוֹ אֶחָד:

It is our duty to praise the Master of all, to acclaim the greatness of the One who forms all creation. For God did not make us like the nations of other lands, and did not make us the same as other families of the Earth. God did not place us in the same situations as others, and our destiny is not the same as anyone else's.

And we bend our knees, and bow down, and give thanks, before the Ruler, the Ruler of Rulers, the Holy One, Blessed is God.

The One who spread out the heavens, and made the foundations of the Earth, and whose precious dwelling is in the heavens above, and whose powerful Presence is in the highest heights. Adonai is our God, there is none else. Our God is truth, and nothing else compares. As it is written in Your Torah: "And you shall know today, and take to heart, that Adonai is the only God, in the heavens above and on Earth below. There is no other."

Therefore we put our hope in You, Adonai our God, to soon see the glory of Your strength, to remove all idols from the Earth, and to completely cut off all false gods; to repair the world, You holy empire. And for all living flesh to call Your name, and for all the wicked of the Earth to turn to You. May all the world's inhabitants recognize and know that to You every knee must bend and every tongue must swear loyalty. Before You, Adonai, our God, may all bow down, and give honor to Your precious name, and may all take upon themselves the yoke of Your rule. And may You reign over them soon and forever and always. Because all rule is Yours alone, and You will rule in honor forever and ever. As it is written in Your Torah: "Adonai will reign forever and ever."

And it is said: "Adonai will be Ruler over the whole Earth, and on that day, God will be One, and God's name will be One."

Source #10: Sefer Yeshaya 2:3

וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לָכֹוּ וְנִעְלָה אֶל הַר יְהוָה
אֶל בַּיִת אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וַיִּרְנֹו מִדְרָכָיו וְנִלְכָה בְּאַרְחֻתָיו
כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וּדְבַר יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַם.

1. The word that Isaiah, son of Amoz, prophesied concerning Judah and Jerusalem.
2. And it shall be at the end of the days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be firmly established at the top of the mountains, and it shall be raised above the hills, and all the nations shall stream to it.
3. **And many peoples shall go, and they shall say, "Come, let us go up to the Lord's mount, to the house of the God of Jacob, and let Him teach us of His ways, and we will go in His paths," for out of Zion shall the Torah come forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.**