

Torah Wellsprings

*Collected thoughts
from
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Naso



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Torah Wellsprings - Naso

Hashem didn't Banish or Forget You

It states in this week's parashah (Bamidbar 4:22) **וְגִשְׁתָּ אֶת רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן גַּם הֵם לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם**, "Take a census of the sons of Gershon, of them too, following their fathers' houses..." We can explain that **בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן** refers to those who feel banished from Hashem. The Torah tells us **וְגִשְׁתָּ אֶת רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן**, we should raise their heads and give them encouragement, **וְגִשְׁתָּ אֶת רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן**, because they, too, are children of Hashem. As it states (Devarim 14:1) **בְּנִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם**, "You are children of Hashem, your G-d". They feel banished, unwanted, but they are Hashem's children, and Hashem will never abandon them.¹

Similarly, it states (Bamidbar 4:24) **זֶה עֲבֹדַת הַגֵּרְשֹׁנִי לְעֹבֵד וּלְמִשָּׂא**, "This is the service of the family of Gershon, to serve and to carry." The Divrei Shalom of Koidenov zt'l explains **מִשָּׂא** refers to the people who feel that they were banished away from Hashem, *chas v'shalom*. They think so, because they suffer *yesurim* and *tzaros*. **זֶה עֲבֹדַת הַגֵּרְשֹׁנִי**, this is their *avodah*, that they must do: **לְמִשָּׂא**, they must carry and accept the *yesurim*, with *emunah* that it is for their best interests. They should not feel that they are **הַגֵּרְשֹׁנִי**, banished from Hashem.²

Sefer Bamidbar begins with **וְאֵלֶּיךָ אָתָּה** (1:2) **וְאֵלֶּיךָ אָתָּה**, and Onkelos translates it to mean, **וְאֵלֶּיךָ אָתָּה**, and Onkelos translates it to mean, **וְאֵלֶּיךָ אָתָּה**.

1. A bachur who was waiting a long time for his shidduch commented to his rebbe, "I think the *Eibershte* forgot about me."

The rebbe replied, "*Chas v'shalom*. One mustn't say that. Hashem didn't forget you."

The rebbe then took the bachur outside, and as they strolled, the rebbe encouraged him to strengthen his *emunah* and *bitachon*, and to trust that Hashem has the perfect shidduch waiting for him.

As they walked, they reached an old-age home, and the rebbe turned to go inside. The bachur asked, "Why are we going to an old-age home?"

The rebbe replied, "It is a good idea to come here. Perhaps we will find an elderly person who met with the Baal Shem Tov zt'l or the Chasam Sofer, and we can hear a firsthand report from them. It will be amazing. We will hear what he saw with his eyes and heard with his ears."

The bachur stared in amazement and said, "But rebbe, they lived two or three hundred years ago. There is no one alive who could have seen them..."

"Why are you so certain?" the rebbe asked. "I thought that perhaps Heaven forgot about some of the old people here, in the old-age home, and forgot to take them to Olam HaBa, and they are living for a very long time!"

Then, the rebbe explained, "Just as you are certain that Hashem doesn't forget to take anyone to the next world, you can also be certain that Hashem didn't forget about you, either. Hashem thinks about you all the time, and He has a shidduch prepared for you."

When Hashem revealed Himself to Moshe in the thornbush, Hashem told him (Shemos 3:7) **כִּי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת מַכְאֲבֵיו**, "I know their pain." The Ahavas Shalom explains: **יָדַעְתִּי** means connection (see Bereishis 4:25 **וַיִּדַע אָדָם**). The *pasuk* is saying that Hakadosh Baruch Hu connects with us and feels the *tzaros* we go through. This, in itself, is our salvation, because even when a fellow man feels your pain, that, in itself, is comforting. Certainly, when Hakadosh Baruch Hu joins in our *tzaros*, this will result in a great salvation."

2. Then the Torah writes (4:26) **וְאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם וְעַבְדוֹ**. The Divrei Shmuel of Koidenov zy'a explains that **וְאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם** means that whatever happens to them, the good times and *chalilah* the hard times, **וְעַבְדוֹ**, they should serve Hashem. Their *avodas Hashem* is their *emunah* that even the difficult times and challenges are all for the good.

יְהוָה הֵשִׁיבָם. The intention is that Hashem told Moshe to count Bnei Yisrael. But we can also translate שָׂאוּ אֶת רֹאשׁ כָּל עֵדֻת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, to mean that the Jewish nation should go up a level. שָׂאוּ אֶת רֹאשׁ, their heads should be elevated, they should reach a level higher than before. They accomplish this when they believe that everything that happens to them is bashert, and for their benefit. This is what Onkelos implies when he writes קִבְּלוּ יְהוָה הֵשִׁיבָם. Let them קִבְּלוּ accept and believe יְהוָה הֵשִׁיבָם, that everything that happens to them is חֶשְׁבֹן שָׁמַיִם, Hashem's plan. When they accept the fact that Hashem is leading them in the best way, it will be שָׂאוּ אֶת רֹאשׁ, which means that they will rise up to a higher level.

With this belief, you won't be jealous of others, thinking, "Why does that person have more money than me?" ... "Why does my neighbor have more nachas than me?" All these questions fall away when one believes that Hashem is leading him in the very best way, in a path tailored just for him.

This brings us back to the discussion we mentioned last week regarding the flags, as discussed in Parashas Bamidbar. Every three shevatim had their own flag, which implies that each group of Yidden has their unique approach to avodas Hashem. This is also true about an individual. Each person's approach is different than his fellow Yid. Every member of klal Yisroel has his *shlichus*, mission in the world to achieve. Hakadosh Baruch Hu, in His wisdom, prepares the means one needs to succeed in his mission. For example, "Reuven's" purpose in life is to give tzedakah and to do chesed. Therefore, Hashem gave him a lot of money. A person shouldn't be upset with his life situation because it is exactly what he needs to reach his perfection and purpose in life. Only Hashem knows precisely what each person needs. Therefore, אֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה לָהֶם, with every situation that Hashem prepares for you, וְעָבְדוּ serve Hashem. The situation you are in is exactly the one you need to do your personal *avodas Hashem*, which is solely yours.³

3. The Minchas Yitzchak *zt'l* (Gaavad of the Eidah HaChareidis, Yerushalayim) recounts that during the Holocaust, in 5704, after much toil and effort, his brother's son managed to obtain for him a ticket on a boat departing from the Port of Constanta, Romania, bound for Eretz Yisrael. At the time, the Minchas Yitzchak lived in Arad, Romania, and to travel from Arad to Constanta wasn't a simple matter. Nazi soldiers were everywhere, and everything had to be done secretly. The Minchas Yitzchak, together with other Yidden of Arad who had tickets on the ship, managed to rent a truck to drive them to the port. They all hoped that their efforts would save their lives from the Nazis.

But the truck broke down midway. They had to get out of the truck and wait an entire day on the side of the road, in full sight of the passing police and soldiers. It was a great miracle that they didn't harm them. לֹא יָחִרָם כָּלֵב לִשְׁוֹנוֹ. When they finally reached the port, they learnt that the ship hadn't waited for them. It was already in the middle of the sea!

There are no words that can describe their disappointment. All their hopes for freedom were shattered... all because of a broken vehicle.

However, they found out that the truck's mechanical failure actually saved their lives. The name of the ship was Mefküre. The ship was attacked at sea, and it sank. Only five crew members survived, and hundreds of Yidden drowned *r"l*. When they heard this, they praised Hashem for saving their lives. When their truck broke down, they thought it was a great *tzarah*, but that is what saved them.

Let us learn a lesson from this story. Whenever there is a *tzarah*, know that it is for your good. They missed the ship, which they thought was a ship to freedom. They stood an entire day in a dangerous spot, in front of soldiers who miraculously and mysteriously didn't kill them. They went through a lot of distress and disappointment, but it was for their good. This is how it is with all challenging situations; they are always for our benefit.

שעשה לי כל צרכי "He Gave Me All My Needs"

It states (Vayikra 27:8) וְאִם מֶנֶךְ הוּא מְעַרְבֵךְ. The Zlotchiver Magid zt'l explains that if a person feels מֶנֶךְ, poor, and he thinks he lacks things in life, it is מְעַרְבֵךְ, due to his low level – and it is because he lacks emunah. If he believed in Hashem, he wouldn't feel poor. He would feel that he has everything he needs. The proof that he has everything he needs is that if he needed more, Hashem would certainly give him more. With this awareness, he is happy with his portion.

Similarly, it states (Tehillim 34:11) וְיִרְשֵׁי ה' לֹא יִחְסְרוּ כֹל טוֹב "Those who fear Hashem will not lack any good." The Zlotchiver Magid zt'l explains that those who believe in Hashem, לֹא יִחְסְרוּ כֹל טוֹב, they don't feel that they are lacking anything.

Rebbe Michel of Zlotchev zt'l was very poor, and people asked him how he says the brachah שעשה לי כל צרכי, praising Hashem, that He gives him all his needs? How can he say this brachah, if he lacks so many of his needs?

He replied, "My need is to be poor. That is my need, because it is part of the mission Hashem prepared for me in this world. With this situation, I can properly serve Hashem and attain perfection for my soul. So, I can certainly praise Hashem שעשה לי כל צרכי, that He gave me everything I need."

This lesson is also written in Ateres Tzvi (Drush 11) zt'l from Rebbe Hershele Ziditchover. We quote his holy words: "I heard that a student came to the Maharal of Prague and said that he thinks he isn't allowed to say the brachah שעשה לי כל צרכי. He explained, 'How can I say this brachah and praise Hashem for giving me everything that I

need, when I am very poor, and there is no food or clothes in my home? My children don't have shoes, they are hungry, and they lack clothes. How can I lie before Hashem and say this brachah, and praise Him for giving me כל צרכי, all my needs?'

"His Rebbe, the Maharal, replied that there is no doubt that he can say this brachah. This is because the brachah has another translation: שעשה לי, everything that Hashem does for me, including the poverty and the yesurim, r'l, they are כל צרכי, my needs. They are for my benefit. If Hashem knew that you needed wealth, He would have certainly given it to you. But since your portion is poverty, it is certainly because Hashem knows that this is for your favor and for your needs."

The Ateres Tzvi quotes the following Yerushalmi (Brachos 2:4):

אנא מחזק טיבו לראשי דכד, מטטי מודים הוא גרע מגרמיה "I have *hakaras hatov* to my head, because when I come to *Modim*, it bends down on its own." The Ateres Tzvi explains that there are people who come to *Modim*, and they don't feel that they have anything to thank Hashem for. They have many tzaros, so why should they say *Modim*, why should they bow down? To say *Modim*, they take some time to reflect on all the *chasadim* Hashem does for them, and only then are they able to bow down. Reb Masanyah said that he doesn't have this problem because he always believes that everything Hashem does for him is for his good. He is always focusing on the positive. Therefore, he is content with his portion, and when he comes to *Modim*, he bows down immediately. He doesn't have to wait a few moments to think for a reason to praise

If you ever wait at a bus stop, you will notice buses that drive by without stopping to pick up passengers. Look closely at the words written on top of the bus, and you will see the words "Not in Service." When a person experiences many stops, interruptions, and disturbances in his life, it is because he is "In Service." He has a mission to accomplish, he is here for a purpose, and the purpose comes along with challenges, stops, and interferences. Whereas, when a person sails through life, he is likely not accomplishing his mission. He is "Not in Service."

Hashem. This is Reb Masanyah's intention when he said: *אנא מחזק טיבו לראשי דכד מטמי מודים*, הוא גרע מגרמיה, "I have *hakaras hatov* to my head, because when I come to *Modim*, it bends down on its own." He was expressing his joy that his head bends down right away. He doesn't have to pause and think about Hashem's praises. He is ready to praise Hashem immediately because he is constantly conscious of Hashem's many *chasadim*,

together with his belief that everything is for the good.⁴

The Week and the Shabbos After Shavuos

Some people feel down after Shavuos, thinking they lacked inspiration on *the yom tov*, thereby not making *kabbalos* to grow in Torah⁵, missing out on a precious opportunity to receive the Torah.⁶

4. Someone said to Rebbe Bunim of Peshischa zt'l that he thinks he can't recite the brachah *לִי כָל צָרָי* because he doesn't have all his needs, and he suffers a lot of *yesurim*. Rebbe Bunim told him, "Your need is to accept everything Hashem does to you with love. So, Hashem *did* gave you all your needs. This is what you need so you can accomplish your purpose in this world" (written in *Sifsei Tzaddikim*, Mikeitz 15).

5. We repeat here a remarkable story, a recent story, as told from the baal hamaaseh:

"For the past six years, I have had the *zechus* to teach a popular *daf yomi shiur* in Teveria, and *baruch Hashem*, the *shiur* is attended by dozens. As is the nature of *Daf Yomi*, the *shiur* takes place every day: Shabbos, weekdays, *yom tov*, during vacation, *erev Pesach*, *motzei Tisha b'Av*, and so on. When I must be away for Shabbos, I appoint a substitute.

This year, תשפ"ה, Shabbos parashas Tazria Metzora, I had to be away on Shabbos for a *simchah*, so I appointed a *talmid chacham* to say the *shiur* on Shabbos afternoon. The *shiur* was beginning a new *masechta*, *Masechta Shavuos*. I felt I was missing out. I would have like to start the new *masechta*, but I had no choice and left for the *simcha*.

On Sunday, I met with the person I appointed to be the *magid shiur*, and I asked him how the *shiur* went. He began to stutter, "I forgot... I prepared the *shiur* well, I knew the material, but on Shabbos afternoon, I forgot all about it and I didn't give the *shiur*..."

I was surprised to hear this because none of the students had called to tell me that there was no *shiur* that Shabbos. I called one of the regulars of the *shiur* and asked him whether there was a *shiur* on Shabbos. He told me, "An amazing thing happened this Shabbos. We waited a long time for the *magid shiur* to teach the *daf*, but no one arrived. We didn't know what to do. Then, Reb Shlomo (an *alef beis* melamed of young children) walked into the *beis medresh*. One of the people sitting around announced jokingly, 'The *magid shiur* has arrived.'

It was a joke, but Reb Shlomo took it seriously. He asked, "Which *daf* are you up to?"

We told him that we are up to *daf ב'* of *Masechta Shavuos*. He immediately rattled off the *Mishnah* by heart as he walked to the head of the table, where the *magid shiur* sits, and then continued to teach the entire *daf* by heart. We were amazed. We asked him whether he knows the entire *Shas* by heart. He replied that this is the only *blatt* he knows by heart. He recently decided to learn *Masechta Shavuos* by heart, and he has reviewed the first page thirty times. He didn't get further than that. This is the only *daf* of *Shas* he knows by heart.

"We witnessed Hashem's *hashgachah* to help us learn Torah. The *hashgachah* began days before. This man became an expert on Shavuos ב', the exact *daf*, for which we needed a *magid shiur*. It is the only *daf* in *Shas* he knows so well!

"This taught us the great importance and benefit of *kevias itim* l'Torah, designating set times to study Torah. Whenever a group or an individual sets a time to study Torah, and they are cautious to keep this time without fail, to the best of their abilities, Hashem will help them succeed. When they need a *magid shiur*, there will be one. Similarly, all other details will be put into place to help them keep their good undertaking."

But they don't have to feel bad because, in some ways, the week after Shavuos is still Shavuos. The week after Shavuos is called

שבעת ימי תשלומין, the seven days for paying the debt. This is because on every *yom tov* of the שלש רגלים (Pesach, Shavuos, and Succos), there is a

6. It states (Shir HaShirim 7:2) מִה יָפוּ פְעֻמֶיךָ בְּנִעְלִים, "Your footsteps were so beautiful..."

The Zohar (Tikunei Zohar 35b, 92b) says that this pasuk and בְּנִעְלִים refer to נעילת החג, when a yom tov goes away. Rebbe Yissachar Dov of Belz zy'a said that פְעֻמֶיךָ can be translated as the beating of the heart. When a yom tov goes away, one's heart beats with regret, wishing he could have accomplished more on yom tov. The pasuk states מִה יָפוּ פְעֻמֶיךָ, praising these feelings of regret and yearning for more.

Obviously, these thoughts are beneficial when they encourage the person to study more Torah and achieve greater accomplishments. Feelings of regret can be detrimental when they lead to distress and despair.

We will explain with a mashal:

A wealthy person read in sifrei mussar that if a person has a lot of money, he shouldn't be proud and haughty (a baal gaavah), because things can turn around, and a wealthy person can one day become poor.

The concept resonated with the wealthy man, and he became very worried. "What will happen if I become poor? How will I buy food? How will I pay my expenses?"

He was so obsessed with his worries until he became mad from worry, and had to be admitted to a home for the emotionally ill.

In this story, a wealthy man studied true ideas and lessons taught by great baalei mussar, but he applied them in an extreme and unhealthy manner, until he became ill.

Similarly, the feelings of regret that people feel after a yom tov are wonderful, and Hashem praises them. Hashem says, מִה יָפוּ פְעֻמֶיךָ, how beautiful are the beats of your heart, at this time. However, if a person is foolish and takes these thoughts of regret to an extreme and to unhealthy places, it can result in distress and depression. The quality of יָפוּ פְעֻמֶיךָ, was lost, due to his negativity that pushed him away from Torah, rather than to draw him near.

Another mashal is of a war between two armies. One army was stationed to the east, the other in the west, and they shot arrows and bullets at one another. The battle went on for some time, until they somehow switched positions. The army that was shooting towards the west was now in the west, shooting to the east, and the other army was now in the east, shooting to the west.

But there was one soldier who didn't grasp what happened. At the beginning of the war, his general told him to shoot towards the west. Now that he was on the western side, he was still shooting at the western army. He didn't realize that the reality on the ground had changed. He shot at his friends and fellow soldiers who stood next to him on the west.

He was promptly arrested. "What are you doing, shooting at your own army?" the judge asked.

He replied, "I am doing what I was told to do. I was told to shoot to the west!"

The nimshal is that one of the greatest weapons against the yetzer hara is cheshbon hanefesh, when one reviews his deeds. He thinks about what he is doing right, what he is doing wrong, and where he can improve. But if he uses these thoughts of reflection in an unwise, unhealthy manner, the weapon that was intended to be used against the enemy, the yetzer hara, is now being used against himself.

The correct path is to make a *cheshbon hanefesh* and then to work on improvement.

The Mishnah (Avos 2:4) states, וְאַל תִּתְּמֵן בְּעַצְמְךָ עַד יוֹם מוֹתְךָ, "Don't trust in yourself until the day you die." A person shouldn't trust that he is a tzaddik. The Kotzker zt'l said that kal v'chomer, we shouldn't trust the yetzer hara when he tells us that we are a rasha, and that there is no hope for us, chas v'shalom. There is always hope. If we try, we can accomplish great things and grow to very high levels.

mitzvah to come to the Beis HaMikdash and to bring a קרבן עולה ראיה and a שלמי חגיגה. These korbanos can be brought the entire week of Pesach and the entire week of Succos. Also, on Shavuos, the korbanos can be brought on the first day of Shavuos, and if one didn't, he can bring the korbanos the entire week after Shavuos. Although, it isn't *yom tov* anymore, and it isn't *chol hamoed*, either, the korbanos can still be brought in the Beis HaMikdash. This indicates that in some way, this week is still Shavuos. Therefore, if a person feels he didn't sufficiently receive the Torah, he can do so now. He can fill his heart with yearning for the Torah, and make *kabbalos* to learn the Torah and to keep it, and *kabbalas* haTorah will happen now, as well. The "gates" are still open.

The Chok Yaakov (Orach Chaim 473:1) states that if a person didn't say *Shehechyanu* on Shavuos, he can say *Shehechyanu* during this week. If one can say *Shehechyanu* now, it shows us just how much it is still Shavuos!

(The Maharil Diskin zt'l isn't certain that we can rely on the Chok Yaakov's *psak*, however, he agrees that the mitzvah of קבלת פני רבו, to visit one's rebbe on the yom tov, can be accomplished this entire week. Once again, this is because the week after Shavuos is still Shavuos.)

As we explained, if a person didn't bring a korban on the first day, he can bring the korban on all seven or eight days of the yom tov. The Gemara (Chagigah 9a) states a machlokes whether the korbanos brought are to make up for the korbanos that were missed on the first day (תשלומין דראשון), or it is to fulfill a new obligation he has of bringing korbanos on the day he arrives at the Beis Hamikdash, which was during chol hamoed (תשלומין זה לזה). According to this view, the korbanos aren't

making up for a previous debt; rather, it is a new debt. You came to the Beis HaMikdash today, and you must bring korbanos today.

Tosfos (ד"ה תשלומין זה לזה) writes that all opinions will agree that Shavuos is certainly for the first day, תשלומין דראשון. If he didn't bring the korbanos on the first day and brings them during the week, he is fulfilling the obligation that he missed on the first day. Tosfos explains that we can't say he is bringing korbanos for the day he came to the Beis HaMikdash (תשלומין זה לזה) because it is a weekday. Therefore, it is more logical to say that the korbanos are to complete the obligation of the first day (תשלומין דראשון).

So, according to Tosfos, during the week, we make up for what we missed on Shavuos. This is another indication that the entire week is still Shavuos, and we can make up for what we missed during Shavuos in this week.⁷

The Tchoortkover zt'l and other tzaddikim would say, שבת נאך שבועות איז נאך שבועות, "Shabbos after Shavuos is still Shavuos." (The word נאך means "after" and it means "still", depending on the context. So Shabbos *after* Shavuos נאך שבועות is נאך שבועות, *still* Shavuos.)

Chazal (Yoma 21b) say, שמגביהין אותו לעולי רגלים, ואומרים להם ראו חיבתכם לפני המקום שסילוקו כסדורו, "The [kohanim] would lift the Shulchan to show it to the people who came up to the Beis HaMikdash for yom tov. They would say to them, 'See how much Hashem loves you! The breads are taken off the Shulchan [as hot as] on the day they were placed on the Shulchan.'"⁸

7. The longest parashah, the longest Midrash, and the longest Zohar are in parashas Naso. The Chidushei HaRim zt'l explains that this is because Hashem has given us the Torah this week (Naso is always the Shabbos after Shavuos), and therefore there is a bounty of Torah in the world.

8. The lechem hapanim were baked erev Shabbos and placed on the Shulchan on Shabbos (see Rambam, hilchos Tmidim u'Musafim 5:10), and remained on the Shulchan until the following Shabbos. When the breads were removed, they were eight days old, but they were still hot. Hashem performed this miracle for us to show His love for His children.

The Berzhaner Rav zt'l points out that one of the three yomim tovim when there is a mitzvah of עליה לרגל is Shavuot, and it seems that the Gemara is referring to this yom tov as well. Let's say Shavuot was on Monday or Tuesday, how did the kohanim show the nation the hot לחם הפנים on Shabbos? This is proof that they remained in the Beis HaMikdash for a week after Shavuot. Why did they stay? Because the entire week is still somewhat Shavuot. And therefore, if someone wasn't ready to receive the Torah on Shavuot, he can do so this week.

The Beis Avraham (Naso) quotes the Be'er Mayim Chaim (Bishalach) as stating that Dasan and Aviram weren't at the main kriyas Yam

Suf. When they heard that the sea split for the Jewish nation, they went to the Yam Suf themselves, and the sea split just for them. Similarly, the Beis Avraham said, Hashem gave the Torah on Shavuot. Those who weren't "present" (with their hearts) to receive the Torah can still receive the Torah now. On this Shabbos, Hashem gives them another chance.

Kabalos Tovos

One way to attach oneself to the yom tov is to take on a kabbalah tova,⁹ even if it is small, and that will be the rope that ties him to the yom tov, even after it passes.¹⁰

9. When people asked the Skulener Rebbe zt'l what kabbalah tova they should take on, he would answer, קבלת עול מלכות שמים, to accept the yoke of heaven, is the best kabbalah tova one can accept on himself.

10. There was a bachur who wasn't learning Torah. The rosh yeshiva told him, "I know what you are thinking." The bachur was shocked. "Does the rosh yeshiva have ruach hakodesh?" he asked.

"No," the rosh yeshiva replied, "I don't have ruach hakodesh. However, Chazal (Avos d'Reb Noson beginning of chapter 20) state, 'Whoever places on his heart words of Torah, this annuls thoughts of war, hunger, foolishness, thoughts from the yetzer hara, idle thoughts... and whoever doesn't think words of Torah, he has thoughts of war, hunger, foolishness....' And since you aren't learning, I know what types of thoughts are flying through your head."

Reb Chaim Aryeh Weinberger Shlita was a close student of the renowned mashgiach and tzaddik, Reb Dov Yaffe zt'l. Reb Chaim Aryeh tells that ten years ago, Reb Dov Yaffe invited him to his home for a Purim seudah. When the simchah at the meal reached a peak, Reb Dov Yaffe said to his student, "If you have something to ask, you can ask it now, because now it is an *eis ratzon*."

Reb Chaim Aryeh said that he wanted to ask a question, and Reb Dov Yaffe encouraged him to do so. Reb Chaim Aryeh said, "I heard a story about the rav, and I want to know whether it's true: I heard that at the beginning of the rav's married life, there was a dispute between the rav and his rebbetzin, and you had to go to Reb Aharon Cohen to work things out between you. The debate centered on caring for their little children in the middle of the night, when they wake up crying. The rav claimed that he should be the one to take care of the children, and that his wife should continue sleeping. He explained that she takes care of the children all day long, so it would be proper that he also takes part in caring for the children. His wife, on the other hand, claimed that he needed his sleep so that he could study and teach Torah. She argued that she should take care of the children at night.

It turned out that both of them would get up at night to care for the children, so they went to Reb Aharon Cohen to ask him what to do.

Reb Aharon thought deeply into the matter and concluded that they should take turns. One night, the rebbetzin should take care of the children, and one night, Reb Dov Yaffe should.

A wondrous thing happened because every time it was the rav's turn, the children didn't cry that night! They were silent the entire night. They only cried on the nights that the rebbetzin was to take care of them. Reb Chaim Aryeh said, "I heard that this went on for years. When it was your night, the children didn't cry."

This week's parashah discusses the laws of a nazir. A nazir may not drink wine or become tamei to the dead, and he cannot cut his hair. Unless specifically undertaken differently, a standard *nazirus* is for thirty days. So, it is just a bit of prishus, a small undertaking. How hard is it to refrain from

wine, etc., for thirty days? And yet, about the nazir it states (6:8) "כל ימי נזרו קדוש הוא לה", "For the entire duration of his nezirus, he is holy to Hashem." The Lev Simchah (5743, א"ש) writes, "This parashah teaches us a profound lesson, and it is a great wonder. A person accepts upon himself not to drink wine for

Is this story true, or is it made up?"

Reb Dov Yaffe replied, "It isn't that they didn't cry on my nights. They simply didn't wake up on those nights."

The rebbetzin, from the next room, heard her husband's response and protested, "The children woke up those nights, as well. They simply didn't cry on the nights that you were to take care of them."

We learn from this story the rule that Chazal tell us: Whoever accepts on himself the yoke of Torah, Heaven helps him, and he is freed from the עול דרך ארץ, the obligations of this world. The mashgiach accepted on himself the yoke of studying and teaching Torah, and was therefore exempt from all other responsibilities.

An example of accepting the yoke of Torah is to put away the telephone when you study Torah. You don't have to worry about missing an important call. Because when one accepts on himself the yoke of Torah, he is freed from all worries. All his needs are taken care of from Above.

Chazal (Shabbos 30b) say that Dovid asked Hashem when he would die, as it states (Tehillim 39:5) הוֹדִיעֵנִי ה' קֶצִי, "Hashem, let me know my end..." Hashem replied that this is something that isn't revealed to mankind. However, Hashem told him that he would be niftar on Shabbos.

Every Shabbos, Dovid learned Torah the entire day, because he knew that the Torah would protect him from the malach hamaves, the angel of death.

On the day that it was destined for Dovid HaMelech to be niftar, the malach hamaves tried to take his neshamah, but was unsuccessful because Dovid was learning non-stop. Outside the house, there was an orchard with many trees. The malach hamaves shook the trees, making a loud sound. Dovid was afraid, "Perhaps this is a sound of war?" He went outside to investigate. He climbed up a stair and the stair collapsed. That was the moment Dovid stopped learning Torah for a moment, and the *malach hamaves* was able to take his soul.

There are several lessons we can take from this story:

1) *כי הם חיינו*, Torah is our life; it protects us from all harm. It protects us from the malach hamaves and the yetzer hara (who is the same malach as the malach hamaves).

2) Some ask, why did the malach hamaves have to bring Dovid outside his home to cause him to stop learning? He could have caused a chair to break in his beis medresh, or something similar, and that would have stopped his learning. But the answer is that when one is in a beis medresh, he is stronger than the yetzer hara. When one leaves the beis medresh, he is at risk. Dovid HaMelech continued learning when he left the beis medresh. The proof is that he only stopped learning when the stair broke, outside. However, since he was outside the beis medresh, he was at a greater risk, and that is where the malach hamaves caught up with him.

3) The nature of people is that when they begin learning Torah, they suddenly recognize that they are hungry, or thirsty, or that they have to take care of something important. This occurred to Dovid HaMelech. He thought there was a war outside. Let us learn to be cautious from this form of yetzer hara. When it is time to learn, tell yourself that you don't need anything. You aren't thirsty or tired, there are no wars, there no conversation is necessary. You are prepared to study Torah, and that attitude will help you succeed immensely in your studies.

a short period, just thirty days, and he reaches the level of *נזיר אלקיו על ראשו קדוש הוא* 'לה', 'The crown of Hashem is on his head... he is holy to Hashem.' We learn from this the power of a *kabbalah tova*. A person accepts on himself a small amount of *prishus*, and Hashem's crown is on his head."¹¹

A *kohen* may not become *tamei* to human bodies, but he may become *tamei* to attend the *levayah* of his close family. The laws of a *kohen gadol* are more stringent; he may not become *tamei* to his own, close family, either. The *nazir* acquires the *halachah* of a *kohen gadol*, because he may not become *tamei* to the dead, and not even to the dead of his close family. The Alshich HaKadosh writes, "The *nazir* acquires the *kedushah* of the *kohanim*. Therefore, he may not become *tamei* to the dead. Furthermore, he receives the *kedushah* of a *kohen gadol*, who may not become *tamei* even to his closest relatives. He attains the level of a *kohen gadol* because of his *prishus* and *chassidus*. These ideas are hinted at in the *pesukim* *כל ימי הויורו לה'*, since he became a *nazir* for Hashem, it is proper that he be like a *kohen hedyot*. Therefore, *על נפש מת לא יבא*, he shouldn't become *tamei* to the dead. However, we will be even more strict with him, *לאביו וכו' לא יטמא*, he may not even become *tamei* to his close family. This

is because he attains the level of a *kohen gadol*. The reason is *נזיר אלקיו על ראשו*, Hashem's crown is on his head, like a *kohen gadol*."

The Alshich adds, "The *nazir* is even greater than a *kohen gadol* because a *kohen gadol*'s crown is the holy oil, and the *nazir*'s crown is Hashem himself." As the *pasuk* writes regarding the *kohen gadol* (*Vayikra* 21:12) *נזיר שמן משהת אלוקיו עליו*, "for a crown – the oil of Hashem's anointment – is upon him." However, about a *nazir*, it states *נזיר אלקיו על ראשו*, "for the crown of His G-d is on his head." It is wondrous. All these levels for a small *prishus*. We learn from this the great levels one attains with *prishus*.

The Baal HaTurim (6:6) explains that the *nazir*'s primary *prishus* is from wine. This small *prishus* causes the *Shechinah* to reside on him, to the extent that people will notice it. They will look at him and see that he has a spiritual presence about him. This will cause people to suspect that the spirituality that suddenly came to him might be a result of *tumah*. They aren't sure that the spirituality is from *kedushah*. This is the reason a *nazir* is not permitted to become *tamei*. He may not go to the graveyard. The reason is that no one will say that he attained his

11. The Lev Simchah added, "The practical lesson is that when one has trouble overcoming a certain *yetzer hara*, he should make a *kabbalah* to refrain from something, and in the merit of the *kabbalah*, he will receive divine assistance, and he will be able to overcome that *yetzer hara*."

The Torah writes (6:2) *איש כי יפליא*, and the Ibn Ezra writes, "*יפליא* means doing something amazing (*דבר פלא*) because most people follow their temptations and this person distanced himself from his temptation for wine. He did this for Hashem because wine ruins the mind and ruins *avodas Hashem*."

Rebbe Yisrael of Husiatin *zt'l* was once walking with his *gabbai*, and a passing goy was impressed by the majestic appearance of the rebbe. He asked the *gabbai*, "Who is this rabbiner?"

The *gabbai* replied, "He isn't a regular rabbiner. He is a *Vunder* (Wonder) Rabbiner."

"What does a *Vunder* Rabbiner mean?" the goy asked.

The Husiatener Rebbe overheard their conversation and replied: "There are rabbis who rule over a city; other rabbis rule in a neighborhood. But there is a rabbi who rules over himself. He is a *Vunder* Rabbiner."

The Husiatener Rebbe's son-in-law recounts this story in his *sefer Ohalei Yaakov*, and he adds the Ibn Ezra we quoted above, which states that *איש... כי יפליא* means that he did something amazing (*דבר פלא*), because most people follow their temptations. A person in control of his desires is indeed wonderful.

"spirituality" from the tumah, from visiting the impure graveyards.¹²

Even after the thirty days of his nazirus pass, the nazir remains with his kedushah. The Alshich proves this from the pasuk (6:20) וְאַחֵר יִשְׁתֶּה הַנָּזִיר יַיִן, "Afterwards [when the nazirus is completed], the nazir may drink wine." Even after the term ends and he drinks wine, the Torah still calls him a nazir. This is because his short stint of prishus made an imprint on him, and he is no longer the same person as before.

The Mishnah in Makos (2:6) tells us that when one kills his fellow man by accident, he must go to an *ir miklat* and live there until the kohen gadol dies. This prompted those in the *arei miklat* to daven that the kohen gadol should die, so they could go free. Therefore, the Mishnah writes, "The mothers of the kohen gadol would supply the [people in arei miklat] with clothes and food, so they won't daven that their children die."

The Gemara (Makos 11.) wonders why the mothers are concerned about their prayers, since the kohen gadol did nothing wrong. It wasn't his fault that these murderers ended up in *arei miklat*. So, why was the kohen gadol's mother afraid of their tefillos? Their tefillos won't cause any harm, because the kohen gadol is innocent! The Gemara answers that the kohen gadol is, in fact, responsible "because he should have davened for his generation [that even accidental murders shouldn't occur], and he didn't daven."

(The Gemara brings an incident about a person who was eaten by a lion. This occurred three parsah away from where Reb Yehoshua ben Levi lived. Eliyahu HaNavi would often come to Reb Yehoshua ben Levi, but after someone was killed, three parsah away from Reb Yehoshua ben Levi,

Eliyahu didn't come to him for three days. Reb Yehoshua ben Levi was held responsible for the death because he should have davened that such accidents shouldn't occur in the area where he lived.)

Based on the above ideas, the Meshech Chachmah (6:8) explains that this is the reason a nazir must bring a korban chatas if someone dies in his presence. What sin did the nazir commit, that he needs to bring a korban chatas? The Meshech Chachmah explains that the nazir should have davened that people shouldn't die around him. Therefore, if someone died around him, he is responsible for the death, similar to Reb Yehoshuah ben Levi and the kohen gadol, who were responsible for the deaths that occurred.

The Kli Yakar writes that the reason for the korban chatas is that the nazir was unhappy with his nazirus and regretted the restrictions he had placed upon himself. The proof that he isn't happy is that he has become tamei. The Kli Yakar explains, "If he were happy with his nazirus, he would be extra careful to avoid tumah. However, he wasn't cautious, proving that he wasn't so happy with his nazirus."

This is human nature. When you are happy about a situation, you are more cautious. If the nazir were happy with his nezirus, he would have been extra careful, and he would be a *zariz* to leave before anyone dies. The fact that he became tamei shows that he wasn't happy with his nezirus. His lack of joy for this mitzvah is his aveirah, for which he brings a korban chatas.

One doesn't need to become a nazir to attain this great holiness. Whenever one refrains from indulging in unnecessary

12. The Gemara (Sanhedrin 65:) explains the prohibition of (Devarim 18:11) דֹּרֵשׁ אֶל הַמֵּתִים: "This is a person who refrains from food, and sleeps in a cemetery to attain a ruach tumah, an impure spirit. When Reb Akiva would reach this pasuk, he would cry: 'If a person who refrains from eating in order to receive a ruach tumah can succeed in receiving the impure spirit, kal v'chomer if a person refrains from eating so he can receive a ruach taharah, a pure, holy spirit, he will certainly succeed to attain it.'"

worldly pleasures, whenever one has prishus, he becomes extremely holy.¹³

Learning Torah with Passion

The Toldos Yaakov Yosef zt'l (Tzafnas Paneach, end of Bishalach) writes, "I heard that there is no Gehinnom. Rather, they bring a *rasha* into Gan Eden, and that becomes his Gehinnom. He hears people davening with joy and dancing as they learn with *hasmadah*, and as he isn't accustomed to all this. It is a very painful experience for him. This is the explanation of the Gemara (Nedarim 8.), 'Hakadosh Baruch Hu is going to take the sun from its sheath. The sun will heal the tzaddikim and punish the *resha'im*.' This means that the same source that brings joy to tzaddikim will punish the *resha'im*. This is also the meaning of the Midrash (Bereishis Rabba 9), 'והנה טוב מאד זה גהנום, 'When the Torah writes (Bereishis 1:31), טוב מאד it refers to Gehinnom.'" It is טוב מאד because it is also Gan Eden! It is a very good place! But it is also Gehinnom for those who aren't accustomed to serving Hashem.

This phenomenon is evident in our world as well. Torah and *tefillah* can be Gan Eden for one person and Gehinnom for another.¹⁴

Reb Avraham min Hahar (from the *rishonim*) writes, "The primary part of the mitzvah of studying Torah is that the person should enjoy the wisdom. As it states (Tehillim 19), פקודי ה' ישרים משמחי לב, 'Torah brings happiness to the heart.' About studying Torah, it is not possible to say, מצות לאו ליהנות נתנו, that mitzvos weren't given for pleasure, because a primary aspect of the mitzvah of learning Torah is the pleasure that one derives from his studies.

"Therefore, if someone made a *neder*, a vow, saying 'Ploni may not derive pleasure from my possessions, it is forbidden for Ploni to read from his *sefer* because he will certainly derive pleasure from the *sefer*.'"

But what should a person do if he doesn't enjoy studying Torah? What should he do if studying Torah is like Gehinnom for him?

The same question applies to *tefillah*. Those who love *tefillah* can daven for hours

13. Someone came to Reb Yechezkel Levenstein zt'l and said that he had been married for many years, and yet he still didn't have children. Reb Yechezkel advised him to make a kabbalah to learn mussar every day for ten minutes. The man took on this kabbalah, and his wife became pregnant immediately afterwards. People were amazed at the miracle. Reb Yechezkel said, "It isn't a miracle. When a person makes a kabbalah tova, he becomes a new person. So, even if there was a gezeirah on the previous person, he is now a new person. On this new person, it was never decreed not to have children."

A bachur forgot his tefillin in a taxi. He was worried because (a) the taxi driver was an Arab and was liable to throw them out. (b) Buying a new pair is very costly.

The bachur made a kabbalah that if he got his tefillin back before Shacharis the following day, he would be cautious with the kedushah of tefillin for the next forty days.

Indeed, the Arab gave the tefillin to a Jewish taxi driver, who contacted his parents, and the tefillin were back in his hands before Shacharis.

14. At an amusement park, you will see lots of lights and colors, and then you enter a beis medresh, everything appears black and white. It seems that the joy is over there. But this is because you are looking at the external side of things. If you could feel the joy each student has from the Gemara he is learning, you would understand that the color and lights are within the walls of the beis medresh, and with those who serve Hashem and perform His mitzvos.

In a dream, the Yismach Moshe saw two Tana'im in Gan Eden. They were each sitting at a shtender, studying Torah. In his dream, the Yismach Moshe asked, "I have that in this world, too."

The answer he received was, "The Gan Eden is in them."

and don't want to stop. Each word is sweet like honey to them. But for others, *davening* is Gehinnom. They rush through the *tefillah*, trying to finish quickly (and sadly, sometimes they talk during the davening, too) because *tefillah* feels like Gehinnom to them, and they want to have as little Gehinnom as possible.

The same is true regarding mitzvos. Some people love performing mitzvos. A mitzvah is more precious to them than gold and silver. But others aren't on that level. So, in summary, how can one experience Gan Eden in this world with their Torah, *tefillah*, and mitzvos?

The answer is: If you believe that there is immense joy there, you will seek it, and you will find it.¹⁵ Rashi (*Shemos* 19:5) writes, "If you accept the Torah, it will become sweet for you from now on because all beginnings are hard."

Peace

In this week's parashah there is *birkas kohanim*, which emphasizes *shalom*, peace, as the final words state (6:26) וַיֵּשֶׁם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם, "Hashem will... establish peace for you." Chazal say, "If there isn't peace, there isn't anything."

Immediately following *birkas kohanim*, the Torah tells us about the *nesi'im* who brought *korbanos* for the *chanukas hamizbeiach*. It states (7:12) וַיְהִי חֲמִיקָרִיב בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא שֶׁאֵת קֶרְבְּנוֹ נִחְשֹׁן, "The one who brought his *korban* on the first day was Nachshon ben Aminadav of Shevet Yehudah. And his *korban* was one silver basin..."

The Kli Yakar notes that it doesn't state נִשִּׂא by the first *korban* brought, unlike the other eleven *nesi'im*, that each day, it states נִשִּׂא before their names. Also, it states וַיְקַרְבֵּנוּ, with a וּ at the beginning of the word, as if others brought *korbanos* before him, although he was the first one to bring *korbanos*. This is all to avoid pride and haughtiness. Nachshon ben Aminodov shouldn't feel proud that he brought the *korbanos* first, because haughtiness leads to dispute. Instead, he should feel וַיְקַרְבֵּנוּ, like he is next to bring the *korbanos*, and not first. Also, it doesn't state the word *nasi* by his name, so he should feel humble. This is also the reason all the *nesi'im* with their *korbanos* are mentioned, although they all brought the same *korban*. The Torah could have written the *korbanos* once, and stated that each *nasi* brought the same *korban*. The Kli Yakar explains that the Torah sought to honor each *nasi*, as this sense of the importance of each individual fosters peace, whereas haughtiness leads to dispute.¹⁶

The concept of peace is also seen in the parashah of *Sotah*. Among the words written in the Torah when it discusses *Sotah* is Hashem's name. Nevertheless, the parashah was erased, together with Hashem's name, and the erased ink was placed into water. The *sotah* drank the water, and if she didn't sin, she wasn't harmed by the water. This proved her innocence, and she was permitted to return to be a wife to her husband. Chazal (*Makos* 11a) say that Hashem says, "My name... should be erased over the water, to make peace between husband and wife." Hashem

15. The Or HaChaim (*Devarim* 26:10) writes, "If people would experience the sweetness and pleasure of Torah, they would chase after it passionately. The entire world filled with gold and silver would be considered like nothing to them because Torah encompasses all the good of the world."

16. We quote the Kli Yakar:

"The parashah of the *nesi'im* follows the parashah of *birkas kohanim*. *Birkas kohanim* concludes with the word *shalom*, because if there is no peace, there isn't anything... and then it immediately discusses the *nesi'im*, which also hints at the theme of peace. This is why it states (7:12) וַיְקַרְבֵּנוּ, 'and his *korban*', with a *vav* at the beginning of the word, as if someone came before him [to bring *korbanos*]. This is so he shouldn't feel pride and *gaavah* [that he brought the *korbanos* first] because haughtiness is the root of all disputes... This is why the Torah elaborates on all the twelve *nesi'im*, so none of them should feel secondary to the ones before him, for this results in peace."

prefers to have his name erased, chalilah, as long as there will be peace in the family.

accomplish? She was permitted to her husband without it!

The halachah is that the process of the sotah, with erasing the parashah and drinking the water, is done specifically when there were no witnesses. No one testified that the woman sinned. So, in truth, she would be permitted to return to her husband even without the water. Why was it necessary to erase Hashem's name, etc., and to have her drink the water? What did this

The miforshim explain that although she was permitted to return to her husband, he would have a negative feeling towards her. For years to come, he might suspect that she sinned, and the love between them would have been lessened. To avoid this, the Torah teaches the parashah of sotah. This is to demonstrate the importance of peace.¹⁷

17. I heard the following story from the baalei hamaaseh:

Someone divorced his wife just a month after their wedding. He remarried, there was peace in his second home. (Although, he had to wait a long time until he had a child, one son, many years after the chasunah.) For years, he held a grudge against his first wife and her family, due to the tzaros he suffered from them.

His former in-law's family suffered immensely. He had four children in shidduchim, and for ten years since the divorce, no one was got engaged. In addition, he became ill with Covid in תש"פ. Many people came to the former husband, asked him to forgive his former wife and family, but he refused.

His former father-in-law became even more ill, and he needed a respirator. Again, someone came to the former son-in-law, and asked him to forgive.

This former son-in-law went to the kever of his rebbe of Bobov zy'a in New Jersey, and davened for his former father-in-law. At the kever, he expressed his dilemma. We wanted to forgive them because he didn't want to be responsible for the death of his fellow man, but he said that it was still very hard for him to bring himself to forgive.

From there, he went to the kever of Reb Shmuel Tzvi of Spinka, zy'a, which is near the Bobover Rav's tzion, and he davened there as well, and once again, expressed the struggle he is going through, to forgive.

As he was returning home, he received a phone call from the Rav of Kroli (who is a son of Reb Shmuel Tzvi of Spinka). (This yungerman is a talmid of the Rav of Kroli.) As they spoke, the yungerman said, "Regards from your father."

The Rav of Kroli asked him what he meant, and he explained that he davened there for his former father-in-law, and he told the Kroli Rav about his struggle to forgive.

The rav of Kroli said, "To forgive them is to go beyond your nature. But if you will do so, Hashem will treat you beyond nature, and you will receive a double yeshuah."

The rav of Kroli told him stories of tzaddikim who were mochel those who harmed them, and he repeated several times, "Forgive your former wife and her parents, and you will receive a double yeshuah."

The yungerman said that he forgives. The Kroli Rav told him that it isn't enough. He must say it in front of three people that he forgives, and he did so.

This occurred on Thursday. On Friday, the hospital took the former father-in-law off the respirator. Shabbos, he stood on his own, and motzei Shabbos, he returned home. The hospital stated that there was no reason to hold him anymore, as he had healed so well.

Two weeks later, one of the sons of his former father-in-law was engaged. Exactly a year later (on the same date that the son became a chasan, only a year afterwards), the yungerman had his own yeshuah, a double yeshuah, because his wife gave birth to twins. It was as the Kroli Rav told him, if he forgives, he will experience a double salvation.

חדש!

הזכיע!

על
פרקי
אבות

נערך ונלקט
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דברי שיחותיו של
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