



THANK YOU HASHEM

For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Va'eschanan

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לכות רפואה שלמה מלכה בת רחל, מיכאל בן שולמית, יעקב משה בן דבורה שירה ואברתם יחודה בן שרה הרבה

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"ESSENTIALLY" ABOVE & BEYONDI

HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

אנכי עמד בינה וביניכם...

And I stood between Hashem and you...

IN THIS PASUK, Moshe Rabbeinu is recounting the way he relayed Hashem's words to the Jewish nation at Har Sinai. R' Michel of Zlotchov zy"a, one of the early Chassidic masters, saw a deeper message hinted to in these words. Our tzaddikim saw the Torah as a guide to closeness with the Author of existence. The Zohar refers to the mitzvos as "Atin", the Aramaic rendering of the word "Eitzos", 613 pieces of advice gifted by Hashem for how to draw His presence into our lives by doing certain things and refraining from doing others. When one acts against the Torah, he is closing one of the channels through which Hashem's energy had filtered through to his life. Aveiros cause walls to go up around our soul, preventing the rays of Hashem's ever-shining Light and Love from reaching us. However, there is one underlying malady which serves as the single greatest barrier blocking Hashem out of our lives: pride. Chazal tell us that if one's pursuits - including his efforts in avodas Hashem - are saturated with ego inflation and self-aggrandizement, Hashem says, "Ein ani v'hu yachol lidor" - I cannot dwell with such a person. When one fills his entire field of vision with himself and his consuming pursuit of personal gain, there is no room for Hashem and His will. Pride and arrogance are the primary barrier that stand between a Jew and his Maker. Before anything else, we must work on attaining the realization that "Ein od milvado"; we are in this world solely to serve Hashem and everything we are able to accomplish is only due to His infinite kindness, completely undeserved. When we lose this awareness, our lives fall into chaos and disarray. In place of a life-giving channel, we have constructed a fearsome barrier between Hashem and ourselves,



shutting out His Light and transformational spiritual Energy from our lives. The holy Zlotchover sees this hinted to our verse. "Anochi": when a Jew considers himself to be an independent entity, worthy of recognition and praise, "omeid bein Hashem uveineichem": this mindset stands as a concrete barrier between Hashem and his soul, shutting out true vitality, energy, joy, and divine assistance from his life. Surrendering any illusion of control and putting Hashem front, right, and center in our consciousness is the golden key to a true relationship with Him and a yiddishkeit that is bursting with life! 🙏

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 🙏 Moshe continues his speech, recounting how he pleaded with Hashem to allow him to enter into Eretz Yisrael. Still, Hashem refused, allowing him only to ascend a mountain and gaze at the Holy Land.
- 🙏 Moshe describes Yetziyas Mitzrayim and matan Torah and declares them unprecedented events in human history. "Has there ever occurred this great thing, or has the likes of it ever been heard? Did ever a people hear the voice of G-d speaking out of the midst of the fire . . . and live?"
- 🙏 Moshe predicts that future generations will turn away from Hashem, worship idols, and be exiled from their land and scattered amongst the nations. But from there they will seek Hashem once more and return to obey His commandments.
- 🙏 Va'eschanan also includes a repetition of the Asseres HaDibros and the Shema, which declares the fundamentals of the Jewish faith: Hashem's unity, the mitzvot to love Hashem, to study His Torah, and to bind these words in tefillin on our arms and heads, and inscribe them in mezuzos affixed on the doorposts of our homes. 🙏

P'nimiyus haParsha

An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

ואתחנן אל-ה' בעת ההוא לאמר...

"And I pleaded with Hashem at that time, saying..."

THE STORY IS TOLD that the holy Baal Shem Tov once traveled with some of his disciples to visit a shul in Eastern Europe. When he came to the entrance of the sanctuary, the founder of the Chassidic movement stopped abruptly and refused to enter. "There is no room," he said. Looking through the open doorway and finding the sanctuary virtually vacant, the chassidim pointed this out to their great master. Again, the Baal Shem Tov insisted, "There is no room." "But Rebbe," the Chassidim protested once more, "the shul is almost entirely empty!" "You don't understand," the Baal Shem responded. "I don't mean that the room is full of people. In that respect it is, as you have correctly pointed out, practically vacant. Rather, what I mean is that the room is absolutely filled with prayers – blemished prayers that were unable to rise to their proper place in heaven. The Zohar Hakadosh refers to *ahava* and *yirah*, love and awe, as the wings that enable one's prayer to rise. Because the people in this place consistently pray without the proper intent, their prayers are unable to rise. Instead, they remain in the sanctuary. Because the room is filled with incomplete prayers, there is no room for me to enter."

In Likutei Moharan, Rebbe Nachman of Breslov teaches that although, as illustrated in this story, many of our tefillos are often unable to rise above, when we manage to pray even a single prayer with the proper passion and kavvanah, all the blemished prayers of the past are lifted by its wings and rise to their proper place in the spiritual realms.

One prayer bursting with true love and awe in an *eis ratzon* of true inspiration is all it takes to elevate years' worth of blemished prayers, affecting the entirety of creation in a major way and causing incredible blessing and spiritual life-force to flow into our lives and the world at large.

The tzaddik sees this idea hinted to in the opening verse of this week's parsha, "*Va'eschanan el Hashem b'eis hahi leimor*", "And I pleaded with Hashem at that time, saying." Rebbe Nachman reads the *pasuk* as follows:

"Va'eschanan el Hashem": When a Jew merits to offer a single prayer to Hashem that is bursting with love, awe, and total concentration, **"b'eis hahi"**: while previous prayers may have lacked the spiritual "wings" necessary to rise to their proper place at the time they were offered, at the time of the single perfect prayer, **"leimor"**: it is considered as if all of those prayers were being repeated as well, this time with the requisite devotion. **"B'eis hahi"**, in this moment of true spiritual connection, those prayers receive their tikkun. Looking back over the thousands of uninspired tefillos we rattled off mindlessly, by rote, can be a very discouraging experience. But Rebbe Nachman is teaching us that we must never underestimate the power of a single prayer. If we will strengthen ourselves to begin anew, we can rectify all those crippled prayers in today's tefillos offered up with focus, emotion, love, and a tangible connection with the divine. 🤴



The blemished prayers of the past rise on the wings of the single prayer that leaves the Jewish heart with love and awe.

Zechus Avos

Yahrtzeit of the Week

13 Av: Sunday Night, Monday – August 3rd

Rav Nosson Nota Shapira zy" a (1585 -1633)

13 Av is the yahrtzeit of Rav Nosson Nota (ben Shlomo) Shapira zy" a, a tzaddik who served as the chief Rabbi of Krakow and served an important role in spreading the teachings of the Arizal throughout Poland. Rav Shapira is most famous for authoring sefer Megaleh Amukos which expounds upon the word Vaeschanan in 252 ways – equal to רב לך. Curiously, the tzaddik was niftar in the week of Parshas Vaeschanan. His teachings on the other parshios are also published in a sefer bearing the same name, Megaleh Amukos. Megaleh Amukos reveals many mind-blowing secrets of the Torah, often shedding light on extremely cryptic teachings of Chazal. Learning through Megaleh Amukos, one realizes that this sefer is the source for many well-known teachings.

The first words of the parsha, **ואתחנן אל יקוק**, allude to this tzaddik in the following ways: The α of **אל יקוק** equals 1000 (as α can represent 1 or 1000), and the remaining letters, **ל יקוק**, equal 56, for a total of 1056. This is exactly equal to the gematria of **נתן נטע בן שלמה**.

שלמה (1056) with the 4 words and one added for the kollel is equal to **ואתחנן אל יקוק בעת ההוא** (1061).

זי"ע (1355) is equal to **ואתחנן אל יקוק בעת ההוא לאמר** (1332) with the 23 letters.

עמוקות spelled out – **תיו וו קוף וו מם וו קוף וו תיו** (1079) with one added for the kollel is equal to **ואתחנן אל יקוק בעת ההוא** (1061) with the 19 letters.

לך רב spelled out - **ריש בית למד כף** with the 4 words (1100) is equal to **מגלה עמוקות** when spelled out in the following way- **מם גימל למד הא עין מם** with one added for the kollel.

Zechuso Yogen Aleinu!

This section is adapted from the yahrtzeit remazim of R' David Friedman. 🤴

The grave of the Megaleh Amukos in the Old Jewish cemetery of Kazimierz, Krakow



Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

BASED ON A novel application of the rabbinic dictum “one’s speech on Shabbos should differ from that of the week” to tefillah, the Chernovitzer described a number of distinctions between the avodah of tefillah during the week and that of Shabbos Kodesh. In addition to the distinction between a time of war and a time of celebration, the tzaddik outlines another difference: the distinction between obligatory and voluntary praise. Standing with both feet planted in the mundanity of the workweek, it is easy to view davening as an obligation, something we wouldn’t do if it wasn’t mandatory. However, on Shabbos, the praise bursts forth from our hearts as if on its own, riding the gushing flow of our deep rejoicing in Hashem’s closeness and love. To a conscious Jew, the Nishmas of Shabbos morning is an expression of a deep desire and want to engage in praising Hashem for all His kindness. Because it is the day of the King’s celebration, the gifts of an elevated Shabbos experience spill over into the days of the week, “*ki hi mekor haberacha*,” “for she is the source of blessing.” Indeed, just as a king does not discriminate in his gift-giving on the day of his rejoicing, the blessings of Shabbos are available to every single Jew, whether one is deserving or not. Shabbos is always a gift, never earned. Therefore, as Chazal teach, even an idol-worshiper who keeps Shabbos properly is forgiven for all his sins. The Chernovitzer teaches that this is what we refer to when we say on Shabbos morning that Hashem is “*oseh nifla’os gedolos levado*”: because “*levado*”, the gift of Shabbos is bound with Hashem’s personal celebration, therefore, “*oseh nifla’os gedolos*”, the most awesome wonders become available to each and every Jew, just waiting to be harnessed for true spiritual elevation. 🕎

This section is adapted from the sefer “*Sidduro Shel Shabbos*” by R’ Chaim of Chernowitz zy”a (1760-1816)

P’nimiyus Ha’Halacha

The Inner Dimension of Jewish Law

ALONGSIDE THE RECITATION of the Shema each morning one recites three *berachos*, two before *Shema* and one following. (*Berachos* 11a) The two *berachos* made before *Shema* are “*Yotzer Ohr*” and “*Ahavah Rabbah - (Ashkenazim)/Ahavas Olam - (Sephardim)*.” The Shulchan Aruch rules that these *berachos* are not *me’akev*, imperative, to the mitzvah of Kriyas Shema - although *lechatchilah* the *Shema* must be recited with the *berachos*, *b’di’eved* one fulfills the mitzvah of *Shema* even if it was not preceded by the *berachos*. (OC 60:3) Still, in such a situation, the obligation to recite the *berachos* remains. When one recites the *berachos*, *Shema* should be repeated. (OC 60:2) In addition to the *machlokes* over whether *birchas kriyas shema* are *d’Oraysa* or *d’Rabbanan*, there is a dispute with regard to the nature of the second *beracha*, *Ahavah Rabbah/Ahavas Olam*. Some *poskim* (Beis Yosef and others) hold that this *beracha* is considered a *birchas hamitzvos*. They bolster their opinion with the Rambam’s ruling that it is forbidden to interrupt between the end of the second *beracha* and the beginning of Kriyas Shema. Others (Rashba, Meiri, Rosh) see this *beracha* as a *birchas hashevach* because it is not formulated as a *birchas hamitzvos* (beginning with the words “*asher kedeshanu*”). Several reasons are given for why the second *birchas kriyas shema* doesn’t begin with the words “*Baruch Atah Hashem*,” among them: A] It’s a *beracha hasemucha l’chaverta*, connected to the previous *beracha* (Talmidei Rabbeinu Yonah, Tur) B] It is a short *beracha* and ends with the words “*Baruch Atah etc.*” (Shu”t haRashba). The practical difference between these reasons emerges in regard to a case where the *berachos* are said out of order or only the second *beracha* recited so that the reason of “*semucha l’chaverta*” is no longer applicable. Indeed, the Meiri says that in such a case, one would need to begin the *beracha* with “*Baruch Atah etc.*” (See, however, *Igros Moshe* OC 3:81.)

The *beracha* of *Ahavah Rabbah/Ahavas Olam* ends with a plea to return to Eretz Yisrael, “Please hurry and bring us blessing and peace. Break the yoke of the nations from upon our neck and speedily lead us upright to our land.” In *Likutei Moharan* (155), Rebbe Nachman explains the reason for the placement of this request by exploring the relationship between Eretz Yisrael and Emunah.

The tzaddik writes that just as the viability of a seed depends on the quality of the earth in which it is planted, a person must see to it that the roots of his consciousness are planted in good, fertile ground. That fertile ground is Emunah, faith. When a person lives with Emunah and the ever-present awareness that Hashem fills all circumstances, difficulties, and challenges, he will be like a mighty tree with deep and powerful roots. Come what may, he will be able to hold tight to Emunah that everything is for the best and carry on with calm, joy, clarity, and patience. Rebbe Nachman refers to this trait as “*Erech Apayim*”, the ability to overcome the natural tendency to be dragged down into the murkiness of existential darkness and confusion and proceed with faith. It was because he desired to attain this special trait, explains the tzaddik, that Moshe Rabbeinu wanted so badly to enter Eretz Yisrael. For it is only in Eretz Yisroel that it is possible to attain this level of Emunah, to lay down powerful roots in the fertile ground of faith that will allow a person to withstand even the greatest storms of the human experience.

Using this idea, Rebbe Nachman explains the juxtaposition between our request to return to Eretz Yisrael at the end of the second *birchas kriyas shema* and the recitation of *Shema*. The only way one can attain the fullest experience of the faith declared in the *Shema* is after expressing one’s yearning for the Holy Land, the headquarters for the *middah* of *Erech Apayim*. 🕎

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

THE HOLY SEFAS Emes once asked a relative to take his two sons, Avraham Mordechai (the future Gerrer Rebbe) and Moshe Betzalel, to a certain Jew in Warsaw to receive a blessing.

The relative set out for Warsaw with the two boys, excited to meet this great tzaddik. Upon his arrival, he began asking the locals where he might find this tzaddik. To his surprise, it took a very long time and multiple inquiries before he was able to track the man down.

When he finally arrived at the address and was invited into the house, he was even more surprised to find that the man seemed to be nothing more than a simple Jew! When he explained the reason for his visit, the man seemed equally bewildered by the request. Nevertheless, the Rebbe's relative was determined to fulfill his mission.

"Even if you know nothing about all this, please bless the children as the tzaddik has requested."

Reluctantly, the man did so. Closing his eyes, he placed his hands on the boys' heads and blessed them.

The whole way back to Ger, the relative was consumed with curiosity over this strange episode. Who was this man, and why did the Sefas Emes want his children to receive his blessing? Could it be that this man is one of the thirty-six hidden tzaddikim in whose merit the world stands?

When the carriage pulled up outside the Gerrer Beis Midrash, the relative ran straight to the tzaddik and begged for an explanation over what had just occurred.

"Yes," the tzaddik replied, "he is a simple Jew. But one time, when he found that he had not even a penny to spend on a meal in honor of his son's bris, he sold his pillow and blanket so he could make a seudas mitzvah. This act of devotion and love performed by a simple Jew made a tremendous impression in Heaven. It was decided to grant him a reward in this world as well - a blessing issuing forth from his mouth would always be fulfilled.

"The man himself," concluded the Sefas Emes, "has no idea that he possesses the power to give blessings that come true."

We must never underestimate the awesome power of a simple Jew's sacrifice for Hashem. 🙏

"THANK YOU HASHEM FOR SHABBOS KODESH!" IS A WEEKLY PROJECT OF @TYHASHEM

"Thank You Hashem" is a powerful sound bite. These simple words are a prayer, blessing, appreciation, sanctification, and expression of spiritual intimacy—all in one. Jews from all walks of life utter them in all life circumstances, finding meaning and strength in direct access to Hashem. Our mission is to ignite that passion and pride in every Jew worldwide. To remind us all that Hashem exists in every single aspect of life. That He loves each of us in every situation, environment, and spiritual position. And that by saying His name with gratitude, we return His love every day.

"THANK YOU HASHEM
FOR SHABBOS KODESH! WEEKLY"
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