



Torah U'Tefilah

A Collection of Inspiring Insights

בס"ד

כ"ה אב
25 Av

Besamei HaTorah ... Beneath the Surface

By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

(יה:ב) להיות לו לעם סגולה מכל העמים אשר על פני האדמה

To be a treasured people, from among all the peoples on the face of the earth. (14:2)

What is meant by a 'treasured people'? This teaches that each and every one is beloved before *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* from all the nations of the world. One might think even more than the forefathers, Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov? The *Torah* teaches, 'from among all the peoples on the face of the earth', we can now say, from before the person and after the person but not the *Avos*. (*Sifri on Devarim, Piska 97b*)

Parshah Thoughts - Ideas and Reflections - Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

In this week's *Parshah* we are given a directive (14:1), "בנים אתם לה", *"You are children to Hashem..."* The *Ibn Ezra* expounds on the usage of the word 'children'. We must remember that no matter what happens to us, *Hashem* is our Father. Sometimes we may not understand His actions, but He always has our best interest in mind, as a father does for his child.

Working on our Middos

Reb Eliezer, the father of the great *Baal Shem Tov*, loved performing the *Mitzvah* of *Hachnasas Orchim*, welcoming guests. He used to send people out to look for anyone who needed a place to eat, so they could come to his house and have a warm meal. Before sending guests on their way, he would give them a package of food so they wouldn't get hungry on the road before they got to their destination, and he would also give them gifts, so they had everything they needed. *Hashem* saw how exceptionally Reb Eliezer did the *Mitzvah*, and decided to test him so he could earn a great reward. The *Satan* jumped at the chance, and said, "I'll go test him!" But *Eliyahu HaNavi* said, "Perhaps it is better if I go." *Hashem* allowed *Eliyahu HaNavi* to go test Reb Eliezer. It was *Shabbos* afternoon when *Eliyahu HaNavi* appeared at Reb Eliezer's door. *Eliyahu HaNavi* was disguised as a very poor man. He was holding a walking stick and wearing a backpack, and he gave the impression that he was being *Mechalel Shabbos*, by carrying in a place without an *Eiruv*. *Eliyahu HaNavi* knocked at the door, and after he was welcomed, said "Gut Shabbos," and entered Reb Eliezer's house. Reb Eliezer was very careful not to embarrass his guests, and always tried to make them comfortable. He controlled himself and didn't say anything about his guest being *Mechalel Shabbos*. Instead, he made a great effort to serve *Shalosh Seudos* with *Simchah*, and after *Shabbos*, he served the *Melaveh Malkah Seudah* to his guest. Reb Eliezer wouldn't hear of letting his guest leave at night, and insisted that he remain overnight. The next morning, Reb Eliezer gave the poor man a large package of food and a nice amount of *Tzedakah*, so he could buy himself some new clothes. He didn't say a word about how the man was *Mechalel Shabbos*, and wished him farewell. It was then that the man revealed to Reb Eliezer that he was *Eliyahu HaNavi*. "*Hashem* sent me to test you on the great *Mitzvah* of *Hachnasas Orchim*," he said. "Because you passed the test so well, and you didn't embarrass me when I came to your door, *Hashem* will *Bentch* you with a very special child who will shine brightly in *Klal Yisroel*!" Soon after, Reb Eliezer and his wife had a child who grew up to be the famous *Baal Shem Tov*!

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

The *Gemara* in *Shabbos* (118b) relates that *Rebbi Yose* wished that his reward in *Olam Haba* be like those who begin *Shabbos* in *Teveria*, and like those who end *Shabbos* in *Tzipori*. *Rashi* explains what this means: *Teveria* was located in a low valley and it got dark there much earlier than in any other part of *Eretz Yisroel*. The people of *Teveria* knew that it was still the middle of the day, but since it started getting dark there much sooner, they accepted *Shabbos* very early. On the other hand, the people of *Tzipori* lived on a high mountain and they had daylight much longer than any other place in *Eretz Yisroel*. Even though *Shabbos* had really ended, they kept *Shabbos* much longer until the sky was dark, even for them. *Rebbi Yose* was teaching us that to keep *Shabbos* longer than the actual time is a very great thing to do!

פרשת ראה תשפ"ו

Parshas Re'eh 5786 *Pirkei Avos* 5

Shabbos Mevorchim • שבת מברכים

Rosh Chodesh Elul is on Thursday & Friday

Compiled by: Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg
Staten Island Z'manim

Erev Shabbos:

Plag HaMinchah: 6:37

Candle Lighting: 7:46

Sh'kiah: 8:04 זמן ושלום Tzeis: 8:50

Rabbeinu Tam: 9:17

Shabbos Kodesh:

Sof Z'man Krias Shema:

Mogen Avraham: 8:55 Gra: 9:31

Sof Z'man Tefillah (Shacharis): 10:41

Chatzos: 1:01 Sh'kiah: 8:03

Havdalah: Tzeis HaKochavim: 8:49

Rabbeinu Tam (72 minutes): 9:16

Next Week: Shoftim

Candle Lighting: 7:37

The Siddur Speaks

In the *Brachah* of *Asher Yatzar*, why do we repeat the words *Nekavim*, openings, and *Chalulim*, cavities? *Rav Shlomo Wolbe*, *zt"l*, says in his *Sefer, Alei Shur*, that the reason we say *Asher Yatzar* is to thank *Hashem* for our bodies working properly, and because of that, we can properly serve Him, as this was the purpose that *Hashem* created us. We are formed with a physical body, and a *Neshamah*. These are two separate entities in 'one box', so to speak. Our job is to bring the holiness from the *Neshamah* and use it to benefit the body. We say these words twice because we realize that just as the body has openings and cavities, so too does the *Neshamah*, and just like if one's body was not working perfectly, he would not be able to serve *Hashem*— even for just one moment, how much more so is one not able to serve *Hashem* if his *Neshamah* was not working properly. That is why we thank *Hashem* twice with these words, once for the body, and once for the *Neshamah*!

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לע"נ: גיטשע בת החבר ר' שלום הכהן ז"ל

ס"ב Middos

Rav Avigdor Miller, זי"ל, constantly taught to be thankful to *Hashem* for every aspect of life. When it rained, he would encourage people to thank *Hashem* for the bountiful fruits and vegetables which were, in potential, pouring down from the Heavens. He would explain the beauty in countless creations of *Hashem*, pointing out how their very shape, color, or size was uniquely suited to the purpose of the Creation. "If we truly think, *Hashem's* wisdom can be seen everywhere. Simply study the apple, the peach, your eye, your hand, and you will surely find a wisdom that can only be *Hashem's*. For this we must give thanks; that is what life is all about." He would point out that rather than create a world of black and white, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* filled the world with color and beauty to make it more attractive and pleasurable for people. A grandchild once watched him sit down to eat an apple. Before making the *Brachah*, he examined the apple and exclaimed, "*Ribono Shel Olam!* Look at this magnificent apple that You created! The wisdom in its waterproof enclosure, the beauty of the deep, tantalizing red color, and the temptingly delicious aroma with which it is perfumed! How can I even begin to thank You for the tree it grew on? And to think that You made it all for me!" With that said, he enunciated the *Brachah* clearly and distinctly, as if *Hashem* Himself were sitting there before him!

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

Rav Elya Svei once said over a very beautiful thought. *Chazal* teach in *Chagigah* (15b), that if a teacher resembles a *Malach* of *Hashem*, then one should seek to learn *Torah* from him. Rav Elya asked, is there anyone today who has seen a *Malach*? Would we even recognize a *Malach* if we saw one?

How can we use this *Gemara* to help us decide who to learn from?

Rav Elya answers that we are taught in the *Zohar* that every blade of grass has a *Malach* that protects it and calls out to it, '*Gidal*', grow. Therefore, if a person acts in this way by protecting others and encouraging them to grow, they are acting like a *Malach*, and it is fitting to learn from them!

ס"ב Middos

A *Mashal* is given. A certain villager shouted as he entered his cottage, "Who left the garden gate open? The goats have been eating the vegetables again! It's bad enough that they jump over the wall every once in a while, and do their damage. But do we have to leave the gate open and make it so easy for them? Everyone should remember to keep the gate closed, or else we won't have any garden left!" His frightened family promised to follow this rule in the future, and for the next few days, everyone made sure to keep the garden gate closed. One day, one of the children, in a hurry to join his friends, forgot to shut the gate, and some neighborhood hogs entered the garden and pulled out all the vegetables and ruined the garden. When this villager returned home and saw what had happened, he became furious. He said, "That's enough! We need vegetables from our garden in order to have enough food to eat! I see that I can't rely on my family to keep the garden gate shut, so I am going to build a wall to block the gate opening, so that those hogs will never be able to get in again and destroy my garden!" One of the children asked, "If you build a wall, how will we get in and out of the house if there is no gate to go through?" He replied, "I'm sorry, but we will have to climb over the wall each time we want to come and go." The child said, "Won't we look a little ridiculous climbing over a wall every time we want to enter or leave our home?" The father said, "It is better to look a little ridiculous, than to go hungry!" The *Nimshal* is that a person's lips are the gate for his tongue. Whenever there is a temptation to speak *Lashon Hara* or make fun of somebody, the gate must be closed so that the 'hogs don't enter'. But if a person sees that he surrenders to the temptation of misusing his power of speech, then he must sometimes wall up the gate by occasionally remaining silent, and not saying a word. He may look a little ridiculous to others as he tries to get along without speaking, but if this is the only way to save himself from the terrible *Aveiros* of having a careless tongue, then it is better to look silly in this world than to be ashamed in the World to Come!

The *Dubno Maggid* gives a *Mashal*. A father had an only son that he loved dearly, and he gave the boy his every request. When the son grew older, he very much wanted his father to buy him a watch. The father went to a professional watchmaker and asked him to fashion a stylish gold watch with an engraved casing. When he presented his son with the watch, the young man's joy knew no bounds. Now, the father was well aware of his son's spoiled nature, and he knew quite well that the boy would quickly grow tired of the watch. He therefore devised a clever plan. The wise father forbade his son to open the case. After some time had passed, the son indeed grew tired of the watch. Only then did the father permit him to open the case. When the son caught a glimpse of the delicate hands expertly crafted by the skilled watchmaker, he experienced a new feeling of excitement over the watch. Sometime later, the son once again grew tired of the watch. The father therefore opened the back of the watch and showed his son the fine wheel movements which operated it. In this way, the son enjoyed the watch for quite a long time. The *Dubno Maggid* explains that in *Hashem's* great love for the Jewish people, *Hashem* desired that we rejoice in the precious gift that He granted us — the holy *Torah*. *Hashem* therefore concealed within it an overabundance of new and novel ideas that are revealed day after day, which constantly renew the experience of learning *Torah*. The more one exerts himself in learning *Torah*, the more he reveals these extraordinary novel ideas which will serve to gladden his heart and make the *Torah* more and more exciting and enjoyable, day after day!

ס"ב L'Maaseh

Many years ago, a young *Yeshivah Bachur* took a walk with his *Rebbe* in a park. It was autumn, and the leaves on the trees around them had started to turn beautiful colors. Some of these colorful leaves had already fallen off the trees, and onto the path they were walking on. The *Rebbe* said to his *Talmid*, "You see those leaves on the ground? They think they are free. They think they can fly anywhere they want because they are no longer attached to the tree. The reality is, however, these leaves will soon wither and die exactly for the same reason. They have become detached from the tree, and that was their source of life. It was what kept them alive. The leaves that are still attached to the tree, they are still alive. They can still grow and flourish because they are connected to their source of life." The *Rebbe* continued, "This is what Shlomo *Ha'melech* meant when he wrote in *Mishlei*, *Eitz Chaim He Lamachazikim Bah*, the *Torah* is a tree of life for those who grasp onto it." The *Rebbe* said, "In your life you will meet people who think they are free because they have detached themselves from the *Torah*, *Rachmana Litzlan*, and they think they can do whatever they want, whenever they want to. But this is not so. It is quite the opposite. People who are not connected to the *Torah* have cut off their source of life. They are like the leaves that are strewn all over the ground and are withering spiritually. On the other hand, the *Torah* is our *Eitz Chaim*. It is a tree of life-giving nourishment to our *Neshamos* and guides us through life, and as long as we are attached to the tree, we are alive." That young *Bachur* grew up to be Rav Mattisyahu Salomon, זי"ל, the *Mashgiach* of the Lakewood *Yeshivah*, and he had commented that those words his *Rebbe* told him when he was younger have stayed with him his entire life, and they still inspire him!

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