



Torah U'Tefilah

A Collection of Inspiring Insights

בס"ד

כ"ב אייר
22 Iyar

Besamei HaTorah ... Beneath the Surface

By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

אם בחוקתי תלכו... (כוג)

If you go with My statutes... (26:3)

Rav Avraham Rappaport, author of *Sefer Minchah Belulah*, writes that the opening word "אם" of our *Parshah* hints to the exiles and Jewish saviors of past and future.

Mitzrayim: Our redeemers were משה and אהרן.

Madai and Paras (Persia): Our saviors were מרדכי and אסתר.

Our future redemption (may it come speedily in our time): אליהו arriving to announce the coming of משיח. (*Parperaos LaTorah*)

Parshah Thoughts - Ideas and Reflections - Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

Hashem guarantees that one who observes *Shemitah* by not working his field, will be *Bentched* with extra produce in the sixth year (25:20). The *Medrash* (*Vayikra Rabbah* 1:1) calls these people "masters of strength" for this commitment. What is so great about their action if they were already *Bentched* in the sixth year with sufficient produce? Rav Yissocher Frand quotes Rav Dov Weinberger (*Shemen HaTov*) who answers that this is a window to the psyche of people. We tend to easily forget the past and get caught up worrying about the present and the future. A person who has the ability to not get caught up worrying about things and appreciating the present is a true "master of strength".

Working on our Middos

Rav Chaim Kanievsky, *zt"l*, was once asked, if someone had agreed to a certain *Shidduch* and a better prospect came along, would it be permissible to cancel the original date with the first person and pursue the second person that came along? Rav Chaim answered, "This is absolutely not allowed to be done." Rav Chaim related, "There was once a case like this and a *Bochur* cancelled a date with a girl he agreed to out with in order to go out with someone else, and the *Shadchan* called him later and told him that the second date had cancelled on him. Just as you do to others, so will happen to you. There was also another case where someone wanted to take revenge on a *Bochur*, and pretended to set him up on a date, while in reality there was never a date arranged. The boy showed up at the girl's home at the 'prearranged time', and the girl's father asked him what he was doing there. He responded that he was there for the date with his daughter, and the father told him that no such date was ever set up. Seeing how confused and embarrassed the boy was, the father felt bad for him and invited him inside. They had a conversation and spoke in learning and shared a few *Divrei Torah*. The boy was unaware that the man's daughter happened to have been in a different part of the house listening to the conversation, and she was impressed by how the boy spoke with her father, and she told her father that she was interested in dating this boy. In just a short while, the *Shidduch* actually went through, and this couple became engaged! The "*Shadchan*" was playing a nasty revenge trick and Hashem 'paid him back' by making the *Shidduch* work out. The "*Shadchan*" had the audacity to ask for *Shadchanus*, and he wanted to get paid for setting this couple up!" Rav Chaim said, "His *Shadchanus* should be two slaps across the face, but not money!"

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

The *Chazon Ish*, *zt"l*, said about himself, "I never met a person who is more naturally lazy than I am." Rav Ephraim Wachsmann, *Shlit"a*, taught from this statement that if we look at how much the *Chazon Ish* accomplished despite the fact that he was lazy, anyone can overcome their natural inclination to be lazy and accomplish vast amounts more than one thinks he can accomplish!

פרשת בהר - בחקתי תשפ"ו

Parshas Behar - Bechukosai 5786 *Pirkei Avos* 5

Compiled by: Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg
Staten Island E'manim

Erev Shabbos:

Plag HaMinchah: 6:31

Candle Lighting: 7:41

Sh'kiah: 7:59 זמן ועז Tzeis: 8:46

Shabbos Kodesh:

Sof Z'man Krias Shema:

Mogen Avraham: 8:43 Gra: 9:19

Sof Z'man Tefillah (Shacharis): 10:30

Chatzos: 12:53 Sh'kiah: 8:00

Havdalah: Tzeis HaKochavim: 8:47

Rabbeinu Tam (72 minutes): 9:13

(some say 9:37)

Next Week: Bamidbar

Candle Lighting: 7:48

The Siddur Speaks

Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin, *zt"l*, would occasionally go visit an elderly relative with his *Gabbai*. The relative was bed-ridden, and always looked forward to her visitors. When they arrived, they couldn't help but notice how poorly lit the apartment was, and how dirty and odorous the rooms were. As usual, Rav Yehoshua Leib asked if there was anything he could do to help. Although the sick relative never allowed him to help, she replied that this time she had a request. "Please *Daven* for me that I merit to live a long life!" The *Gabbai* was shocked at her words, thinking of the poor quality in which she lived, and wondered why it was so important for her to cling to life? The woman, noticing the *Gabbai's* reaction, explained herself to him and said, "You must be wondering why I want to live many more years in such conditions." She continued, "Once every two weeks, a nurse comes to bathe me and clean my room, and for an hour or two after that, it remains fit for me to say *Brachos* to my Creator. There is a *Shul* across the street and I am able to open my windows and respond 'Amein' and 'Yehei Sh'mei Rabbah' to the *Tefilos*. It is my hope to live for many years to come so that I can continue *Davening* and answering 'Amein', even if it is only once every two weeks!" Rav Yehoshua Leib was so impressed by her words that he repeated them to others many times!

The *Chinuch* writes (*Mitzvah* 328): One is not allowed to harvest that which sprouts by itself in the seventh year, nor from what sprouts in this year from what was planted in the sixth year. This is called aftergrowth. It states in this week's *Parshah* (25:5), 'The aftergrowth of your harvest you may not reap,' that is, not to reap in the usual manner that we do every year. Nevertheless, we are allowed to eat it, provided we eat it in a state of abandonment. The *Torah* is teaching that the person has no right or claim to the field in this year, as everything is in the domain of *Hashem*. *HaGaon* Rav Yitzchak Arieli, author of '*Aynayim LaMishpat*', writes an eye-witness account of an incident that happened about a hundred years ago in *Eretz Yisroel*, and the *Brachah* attached to those who keep *Shemittah*. The story took place and Petach Tikvah and Rav Yitzchak Arieli writes: "I was a young boy and I lived in Petach Tikvah, which was then a new settlement. With much pain, during a *Shemittah* year, many farmers relied on the *Heter* [permissibility] to sell their fields in *Shemittah* to a non-Jew so they could work the fields like any other year. Except for one field, which belonged to the *Tzadik* Rav Zev Shachor, who left his field uncultivated according to the holy *Torah*. The field was surrounded by signs that said '*Hefker*', ownerless, and anyone who wanted could go in and take its fruit. I remember people telling Rav Zev, 'You are throwing away your money,' and he would respond, 'You should know that my intent when buying this field was to be able to fulfill all the *Mitzvos* that are dependent on the Land, and you wonder why I am meticulous about properly keeping the *Mitzvah* of *Shemittah*?!' That year there was a terrible plague of locusts throughout the area. I saw with my own eyes how the locusts devoured all the produce in the fields and even ate the bark off the trees. The owners stood and cried as they were unable to stop the devastation. Swarms of locusts flew in by the thousands. The skies were frighteningly dark from the swarms, which were accompanied by the loud noise of the chirping of the locusts. The swarms of locusts would descend on one field, and in a short time all the produce would be devoured. They would then continue to the next field and destroy its produce in a matter of minutes. I testify that I saw how the locusts passed from field to field, and when they reached the field of Rav Zev Shachor, to the amazement of everyone, the swarm rose up, skipped over his field, and landed in the field behind it. Only the field of Rav Zev, who properly kept the *Mitzvah* of *Shemittah*, the swarm did not come close!"

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

After little Yaakov Kamenetsky was born, his family moved to a small town by the name of Dolhinov, where the people of the village had an unquenchable love for *Torah*. As a young child, his father would take him on *Shabbos* night at two in the morning to the *Beis HaMedrash* which was filled with the sounds of *Torah* learning, as if it was in the middle of the day. At the age of eleven, the young Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky left home to learn in the *Yeshivah* of Minsk, where he passed an entry exam with the *Rosh Yeshivah*, Rav Shlomo Glovenchitz, *zt"l*, displaying his brilliance in learning. The *Rosh Yeshivah*, however, was still unsure whether he should accept such a young boy into the *Yeshivah*, and told him: "You are not even *Bar Mitzvah* yet." With the innocence of a child, the young Rav Yaakov replied, "Well, I came here to learn, not to be the tenth man of a *Minyan*." Rav Yaakov was accepted into the *Yeshivah*, and made his way to become one of the greatest *Torah* giants of his generation!

Rav Yisroel Salanter, *zt"l*, said, "When I go up to *Shamayim*, I will not be afraid of the question of why I wasn't like Moshe *Rabbeinu*. The question I am afraid of is why I was not everything that Yisroel Salanter could have been!"

Rav Meilich Biderman relates a story that illustrates how one should be aware that he is powerless without *Hashem*, and that all his achievements and circumstances are directed by *Hashem*. There is a wealthy *Baal Tzedakah*, who sees people who collect *Tzedakah* in his factory, since that is where he spends most of his day. The factory has many rooms and corridors, and people often get lost while searching for his office. The owner put up a sign on his door which said, "The *Baal HaBayis*'s Office." Once, a collector came to his office and said, "Why does the sign call you the *Baal HaBayis*? You're not the *Baal HaBayis*! *Hashem* is the *Baal HaBayis*! You're just a pawn in His hand." The factory owner didn't get upset with this man, and even gave him more of a donation than usual. He also said he would correct the sign. On the following day, the sign read "Manager", instead of "Owner and CEO". He no longer called himself the *Baal HaBayis* or CEO. *Hashem* is the *Baal HaBayis*, not he. A few days later, a water pipe that ran along the ceiling of the factory's warehouse burst open, and the products that were stored there were getting ruined. The manager saw this on his surveillance camera. He also saw that the female employee, who should have been paying attention to something like this happening, was busy with her phone, and was oblivious to the damage the burst pipe was creating. He quickly tried to contact her through the PA system, but she was so engrossed in her phone that she didn't hear anything. As a result of her negligence, the warehouse sustained a lot of damage. Understandably, that employee was fired. When this employee's husband heard that she was fired, he was outraged at the thought of losing their source of income. He loaded his gun and went down to the factory, intending to murder the CEO. When he entered the building, he was dumbfounded by the many wings and corridors. The factory was a maze! His wife had told him to find the door that said CEO on it, but he didn't know where to find it. He asked one of the employees for directions to the CEO's office, and when he finally reached it, however, he read the sign on the door. It said Manager. "This isn't the CEO's office," he thought. He knocked, entered, and said, "Where's the boss? I want to speak with the CEO." The CEO pointed upwards. His intention was, "*Hashem* is the Boss. I'm just a pawn in *Hashem*'s Hands." But the man misunderstood. He thought he was being told that the CEO was on the next floor up. The CEO suspected foul play, so he followed that man on the surveillance cameras, and understood that he had come to kill him. He called the police, the man was arrested, and was sent to prison. The manager's life was saved because he proclaimed, "*Hashem* is the *Baal HaBayis*. I'm just the manager and a pawn in His Hands!"

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