

Torah Wellsprings

*Collected thoughts
from
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Bereishis



Torah WELLSPRINGS

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Torah Wellsprings

Bereishis

Bitachon

Someone didn't have the money to buy a seat for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in his shul where he davened throughout the year, but he trusted that Hashem will help him find a seat in shul available for him, where he can sit down and daven. He came early, before the tefillos began on Rosh Hashanah, and he studied the map, hoping to find his name there, but it wasn't there. No place was arranged for him. So he stood in the isles, between the many bachurim, and he was pushed from side to side by everyone who passed. Then, someone called him and said, "Why are you standing in the isle? Your place is right next to me!"

He went to see what he was talking about, and he

saw that his name was on the seat. That year was תשפ"ג, and his name was there from last year's Rosh Hashanah, year תשפ"ב. It was placed there for Rosh Hashanah a year before, and apparently this seat was never sold, so his name was still on it.

Wondrously, Hashem arranged a place for him.

(Obviously, when one can afford to buy a seat, he should, so he can daven properly, but when the situation doesn't enable it, and he has the midah of bitachon, Hashem will help him.)

It states in this week's parsha (3:19) בְּזֵיעַת אֶפְיֶיךָ תֹאכֵל לֶחֶם, "By the sweat of your face, you will eat bread." The pasuk is discussing the obligation to make hishtadlus for parnassah, but together with this obligation is the awareness that everything is from Hashem. We can trust in

Hashem, and Hashem will help us.

The Gemara (Kesubos 104a) states that moments before Rebbe was niftar, he raised his ten fingers and said, "Ribono Shel Olam, you know that I toiled with all my ten fingers in Torah, and I didn't take any pleasure from this world, not even with my tiny finger." The miforshim ask that Rebbe was very wealthy. The Gemara (Sanhedrin 36a) states, "From Moshe Rabbeinu until Rebbe, we don't find Torah and wealth together (תורה וגדולה במקום אחד)." So, how could he say that he didn't enjoy this world a bit, even from his small finger?

Rebbe was saying that he didn't have any pleasure from his fingers. He recognized that all pleasures he enjoyed were given to him directly from Hashem, and they aren't the work of his own hands.

The Imrei Noam zt'l discusses the pasuk בְּזֵיעַת אֶפְיֶךָ לֶחֶם, "By the sweat of

your face, you will eat bread," and he writes that עבודה is roshei teivos for עבודה, בלב זו תפילה, "The work of the heart is tefillah" (Taanis 2a). This tells us that one doesn't have to sweat and work hard to earn his parnassah. He can earn his parnassah with his tefillah. He doesn't need בְּזֵיעַת אֶפְיֶךָ, the sweat of the face, and the hard work. He needs tefillos, said from the depths of his heart. Although it states, וברכתך בכל, אשר תעשה, that Hashem blesses us when we *do*, (from what we learn the chiyuv of hishadlus) however, Chazal (Sanhedrin 65a) tell us עקימת שפתיו הוי מעשה, the moving of the lips is called an action. Therefore, davening can also be called hishtadlus. (This is written in Maor v'Shemesh, Bishalach, quoting Rebbe Mordechai of Neshchiz zt'l.)

We say in the Selichos, השתדלו והרבו תחינה ובקשה. This is saying that השתדלו והרבו the majority of our hishtadlus should be תחינה ובקשה, our tefillos to Hashem.

The word לחם means bread, but it is also an

analogy for Torah, as it states (Mishlei 9:5) לכו לחמו בלחמי. The Yismach Moshe (בשלח פרשת) teaches that although בזעת (הזמן) is a curse (after the sin of the Eitz Hadaas Hashem cursed the earth), that we should have to toil for our parnassah, but if we want to free ourselves from this curse, the solution is to toil in Torah, which is also called לחם. That toil will free us from needing to make the other toil.

It states (Tehillim 104:21) הַקִּפְיִרִים שִׁאֲגִים לְטָרֶף וְלִבְקֹשׁ מֵאֵל-לֵאמֹר, "The young lions roar for prey and to request their food from Hashem." שִׁאֲגִים means roaring, and וְלִבְקֹשׁ is requesting in a calmer manner. When people make hishtadlus, they roar, they are busy. They think everything is dependent on them. Then, when they daven, it is וְלִבְקֹשׁ, a silent and often unemotional request. Someone who acts this way, he is like the animals (הַקִּפְיִרִים). He isn't acting like a human being. This is because it should be

the opposite. The primary effort should be when we daven. That should be our primary hishtadlus.

The Influence of the Yom Tov

The Gemara (Sukkah 53a) states that at the Simchas Beis HaShoavah, chachamim juggled with אבוקות של אור, "torches of light". They threw the "torches of light" from one hand to the other, and the light of the torches shone to all sides. We can explain, b'derech remez, that this hints to us that the light of the yom tov should shine to the entire year. Succos has past, but as chasidim say, "It didn't pass, it went in. It became part of us. The lessons of succos, its holiness, and the brachos of the yom tov remain with us throughout the year."

The Mishnah (see Yoma ch.6) states, על כל סוכה וסוכה אומרים לו, "At every succah that he came to, people told

him, 'There is food here. There is water here.'"¹

Rebbe Yisrael (the Yanuka) of Stolin zt'l said that hinted in these words is that על כל סוכה וסוכה, from every year Succos, until the coming Succos, אומרים לו הרי מזון הרי מים, he receives bounty of parnassah. The mitzvos of Succos brings us a shefa of food and drink for the entire year, until next year Succos.

We daven on Succos, והשיאנו ה' אלקינו, which means that Hashem should load onto us the kedushah of the yom tov, more than we are

able to carry on our own (Abudurham on Pesach).

The Abudurham also explains that והשיאנו means fire (as in Rosh Hashanah 22b, משיא²). We request והשיאנו ה' אלקינו את ברכת מועדיך that Hashem should enlighten us with the light of the yomim tovim.³

It states (Shemos 34:22) והג' והאסיף תקופת השנה, and the Sfas Emes (תרל"ה ד"ה שמיני) says that this means Succos which is תקופת השנה, the strength for the entire year. The year's existence, and all the year's

1. According to the literal meaning, this is referring to the person who took the goat to the עזאזל, to throw it off a cliff on Yom Kippur. There were huts along the route, and there was food and drink there, and people offered it to him. He never partook from the food because it was Yom Kippur and eating is forbidden, but the fact that food was available for him, calmed him, and he was able to carry on until he reached his destination.

2. The Gemara is referring to the bonfires beis din would light on mountains, to let people know when was rosh chodesh.

3. Rebbe Moshe Kobriner zt'l (Imros Tahoros, Shavuot) said a similar explanation. He said והשיאנו means: זאלסט אונס אריין פלאקערן און אריין שיינען: "Hashem should shine into us the holiness of the yom tov!" קדושת יו"ט, מען זאל זיך קענען נעמען א שטיקל שמחה! "We should merit to take along a touch of simchah," a drop of simchah from the yom tov.

bounty, comes from the Yom Tov Succos.⁴

Hashem is with Us All Year

The Midrash says that after the seven days of Succos, Hakadosh Baruch Hu says, קשה עלי פרידתכם, "It is hard for Me your departure," and Hashem asks us to stay one more day.

The question is that after Shemini Atzeres passes, it will also be hard for Hashem when we leave. So what is accomplished by staying one more day? Inevitably, there will be a moment when it is hard for Hashem, keviyachol, when we leave!

It is repeated that the Yismach Yisrael zt'l told the following mashal to answer the question:

There was a king who had a son, and they both loved each other immensely. When the son got married, he lived far away from the king, and the king and the son didn't stop yearning for one another. One day, the father, the king, came to visit. The son was very happy all the days of the visit. When it was time for the king to return to his homeland, the son came to his father and expressed his disappointment that the king will be leaving him. The father said, "I have a solution for you. Build a home for me, near where you live, and I will remain here with you."

Similarly, when Succos is about to pass, Hakadosh Baruch Hu says to Bnei

4. The Gemara (Avodah Zarah 3a) calls the mitzvah of succah מצוה קלה, an easy mitzvah. The concept of בריה קלה, refers to an insect that eats, it consumes, but it doesn't excrete (see Gittin 56b). It takes in, and it doesn't give out. Reb Avraham Yehoshua Freund of Asad zt'l said that succah is called מצוה קלה because it shines holiness into the Jewish nation, and the shine should remain inside, and never leave.

Yisrael, קשה עלי פרידתכם, it is hard for Me when we depart. It is hard for both of us. However, there is a solution. Build a mishkan for me, and I will dwell with you, always."

Even in our times, when we don't have a Mishkan, make your homes a Mishkan, a place for the Shechinah, and Hashem will remain with us the entire year.

But the person says, "But how can I possibly make a place that will be fitting for You? I am a human being, imperfect, what can I do to make a place for You?"

Hashem replies, עכבו עמי, "Stay with me for one day." This means to take upon yourself a small kabbalah. Take something along with you for my sake, something small that you can keep. Hashem isn't asking for a lot. Do something small, but do it for Me, and I will dwell together with you the entire year.

Throughout succos, we bring many korbanos, but on Shemini Atzeres, we bring, פר אחד איל אחד, far fewer korbanos, just a single פר and a single איל. The Avnei Nezer explains that this is to tell us that something small is also sufficient, and Hashem will remain with us, and He will rejoice with us. This small kabbalah will maintain the light of the yomim tovim for us, throughout the year.

There is a tefillah written to be said when one leaves the succah. In this tefillah, it states, ובזכות צאתי מביתי החוצה ודרך מצותיך ארוצה יחשב לי כאילו הרחקתי, "In the merit that I left my home and went outside to perform the mitzvah of sitting in succah, may it be counted as though I went to galus." There is a certain amount of discomfort, having to leave the house to eat in the succah. We say in this prayer that if it was decreed galus, exile, on a person (or on a community, etc.) *chalilah*, let the galus to the succah be considered like

we were already in galus, and that we already received our punishment.

The question is that galus is extremely painful. It is a far greater punishment than simply picking oneself up and eating in a succah for seven days. How can this small discomfort take the place of galus?

The Yeitav Lev (first night of Succos, 5) answers this question. He explains that in Hashem's eyes, small things are considered and viewed to be very significant and great. The small discomfort of galus to the succah, in Hashem's eyes, is viewed and considered like the person went to galus and he had already received this punishment.

We quote, "It states (Bereishis 24:1) וְה' בָּרַךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם בְּכָל, 'Hashem blessed Avraham with בְּכָל, *everything*' and בְּכָל, *everything* means כָּל דָּהוּ *anything*, even a drop. The Gemara (Yoma 74a) says that כָּל דָּהוּ means even a drop of *chelev*, forbidden fats, is also

forbidden. As Rashi writes, אִפִּילוּ כֵל שְׁהוּא מִשְׁמַע כָּל, the word כָּל implies that even a tiny drop is forbidden. Therefore, when it states וְה' בָּרַךְ אֶת אַבְרָהָם בְּכָל, 'Hashem blessed Avraham with בְּכָל, *everything*' this means that Avraham, and also the Jewish nation, receive reward even for a כָּל דָּהוּ, a drop of a good deed. That, too, will make a great imprint in heaven.

"As the Chovas HaLevavos (Cheshbon HaNefesh 5) writes, 'It shouldn't be small in your eyes anything you do for Hashem, even a word, and even a look, because the little that you do is massive for Him (כִּי הַמְעַט) (מִמֶּנּוּ רַב אֲצִלוּ). The same is with aveiros. The best example of this is the sun. When it moves an amah on earth, it moved vast distances in heaven'.

"Therefore, we request that going out of the house should be like going to galus. This is because in heaven, this small deed is seen far greater than it

appears to us, and it makes a great imprint."⁵

There is a wonderful vort from Reb Moshe Leib Sassover zt'l. On yom tov, we say *אתה בחרתנו*, "You chose us from all nations... You love and You desire us..." Immediately after yom tov passes, we say in Shemonah Esrei *...אתה חוננתנו*, "You give us wisdom..." (This is the Havdalah we say in Shemonah Esrei.) Rebbe Moshe Leib Sassover said, "It is the same *אתה*, 'You' of *אתה בחרתנו*, as the *אתה*, 'You' of *אתה חוננתנו*. Hashem remains the same Hashem. When it is yom tov, and when it is weekdays, we are

associating with the same Hashem *yisbarach*. Therefore, even after the yom tov passes, don't despair, don't think that we lost our connection with Hashem, because it is the same *אתה*. We can still connect with Hashem with our good deeds, with our mitzvos, etc. And as we are explaining, the kabalos tovos will grant us an aspect of the yomim tovim even after the yomim tovim pass.⁶

Shabbos

Rebbe Dovid'l of Tolna zt'l said that Shabbos

5. A person needed a nail for his personal needs, and he saw an expensive chandelier hanging from the ceiling. He understood that it is hanging on a nail. He thought to himself, "The chandelier is very precious and beautiful and it costs a lot of money, but the nail is cheap and unimportant. It won't bother anyone if I take it." People shouted at him, "It is true that the nail is inexpensive, but without it, the chandelier will fall." This is the response we give to the people who say that a small kabbalah is nothing at all. We reply, even if it is small and it appears unimportant, but we need it to hold onto the yom tov throughout the year.

6. We can also explain that when we say *אתה בחרתנו*, don't forget that soon you will say *אתה חוננתנו*, and therefore make a kabbalah tovah, so the yom tov will remain with you.

Bereishis is הכנה על כל שבתות השנה, the preparation for all Shabbosim of the year.

that is how it will be the entire year."⁷

The Tzemech Tzedek of Lubavitz zy'a said, ווי מ'שטעלט זיך אוועק שבת בראשית אזוי גייט די "How a person sets himself on Shabbos Bereishis,

It states (2:3) וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹקִים אֶת הַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ "Hashem blessed the seventh day, and He made it holy." The Zohar (which people say Friday night before the seudah) teaches, "All brachos, above and below,

7. The Reshab of Lubavitz zy'a said, quoting his grandfather, The Tzemech Tzedek zy'a, that there is a great happiness in heaven on this Shabbos, like the joy a father has when he brings his son for the first time to cheder to study Torah. This is how it is at the beginning of the year. Our father in heaven is very happy when he sees that his beloved children are beginning the Torah from Bereishis. Therefore, it is an eis ratzon, and many yeshuos can happen on this Shabbos.

The Pnei Menachem zt'l of Gur would say that there is a renowned segulah to open the aron kodesh for kriyas haTorah. When the aron kodesh is open, it is an eis ratzon for tefillah. The Rosh (Hilchos Sefer Torah 1) writes that in our days, the mitzvah of writing a sefer Torah is performed with buying sefarim, such as chumashim, Mishnayos, Gemaros, and their miforshim, etc. The Rosh explains: "The mitzvah of writing a sefer Torah is to learn from it... and with the Gemara and the meforshim, he will know the mitzvos and the halachos clearly. Therefore, these are the sefarim that a person has a mitzvah to write." (See Shulchan Aruch, Yorah Deiah 270:2, with the miforshim there).

So, just as opening the aron kodesh is an eis ratzon, the same will be when one opens and begins the Torah from Bereishis. This is a wonderful eis ratzon. Certainly so when the yeshivos and the kollelim reopen at this time. It is an eis ratzon, a very special time in Heaven.

come from the Shabbos." Shabbos is like a spring that gives brachos - ruchniyus and gashmiyus - to all worlds, above and below. The Zohar states wondrous brachos that we receive from the Shabbos, and in particular, on Friday nights.

The Chofetz Chaim (al HaTorah) writes, "Those who lack emunah are so foolish. They come to Shabbos late and they are quick to leave the Shabbos. Behold the weekday was cursed with בועת אפיך תאכל לחם, that they have to work hard to earn parnassah. Only Shabbos, alone, is freed from this curse. Hakadosh Baruch Hu, Himself, blesses this day, as Chazal say ברכו... וקדשו... Instead of being wise and to come to Shabbos early to receive the brachos, and to leave Shabbos late, so they won't enter quickly into the curse of the weekdays, they do the opposite. They begin the brachos of Shabbos late, and they rush to leave it and to come quickly to the curses

of the weekdays. Fortunate are those who understand this concept and accept Shabbos early and leave Shabbos late, so they can receive Hashem's brachos."

The Gemara (Kesubos 103a) states that after Rabbeinu Hakadosh was niftar, he would come every Friday night to his home and he appeared like a living person. He would make kiddush for his family. Reb Akiva Eigar (Gilyon Hashas) quotes the Sefer Chasidim (תתשכ"ו) "He came dressed in Shabbos clothes and he was motzi his family with kiddush. Unlike other dead people who are patur from mitzvos, the tzaddikim are alive after their demise, and they can make kiddush and be motzi others."

Nevertheless, we have to understand why specifically Rebbe was seen saying kiddush. This great level isn't written about any other Tana or Amora. Also, why did this revelation occur specifically on Friday night?

Ben Ish Chai (Ben Yehoyada) explains, "Hashem yisbarach doesn't hold back the reward from any being. Chazal (Kesubos 104a) tell us that all the chachamim of the generation were davening for Rebbe that he shouldn't die. They prayed a lot, they cried, and they fasted, and they did this in large groups. This mass tefillah wasn't done for any other tzaddik before. In the end, Rabbeinu Hakadosh was niftar, but Hashem doesn't withhold reward, and the people who davened that Rebbe should live deserve reward. Hashem gave Rebbe permission to come to this world in a human body, so the bounty that Rebbe brought to his

generation should continue, and it shouldn't stop after he was niftar."

This is because when a tzaddik is niftar, the great loss is that the bounty he brought to the world ends, however, "This time, he came to Olam HaZeh, and he sat among the living, so it isn't considered that he left the world. The shefa, bounty, that he would give to the world when he was alive continued even then."

Now, we understand the reason why Rebbe came to this world specifically on Friday night. That is the time when the bounty comes down to the world for the entire week.⁸

8. Reb Yankel Galinsky zt'l tells, that once he came to a butcher store, and he saw that everyone is looking all over for something. He asked them what is going on, and they told him that the wife of the butcher was there, and she lost her expensive, diamond ring, and everyone is looking for it.

I went outside and I saw a cat who was busy with the garbage, taking the leftover, thrown out pieces of meat. He saw the cat take an item, smell it from all sides, and then threw it away. Reb Yanke'le recognized that this item was the ring! He wanted to shout at the cat, "Why are you going after spoiled meat? With this

Now, that the winter Shabbosim are beginning. When the nights are longer and we can have a Friday night of 13 hours etc., and all the gates of heaven are opened. Whoever wants to take bounty and blessings can take and receive it. A person should think about how he spends these long nights, how many hours he is occupied with Torah and tefillah and songs to Hashem, and how many hours are lost, without any benefit, chas ve'shalom?

Perhaps you will say that sleeping is a mitzvah on Shabbos, as we say in the

zemiros, השינה משובחת, and Chazal (Yalkut Reuvani, Ve'eschanan) writes, שינה בשבת תענוג, that sleeping on Shabbos is a pleasure, but behold the Vilna Gaon (beginning of Divrei Eliyahu) ז"ל said that שינה בשבת תענוג, it is a pleasure, like the dessert that comes at the end of the meal. The pleasure of the desert is, when the person eats a bit, to leave over a good taste in his mouth, but when a person eats too much sweets, he throws up everything he ate. So, it will be when a person sleeps too much. (He certainly shouldn't sleep from 9:00 pm until late in the morning...)⁹

ring, you can buy all the meat in the world you want?"

Reb Yanke'le said, "We are human beings. Let us not throw away a diamond ring for some spoiled meat."

For our discussion, Friday night, Hakadosh Baruch Hu keviyachol marries the Jewish nation, as we say in the tefillah אלה קדשת. The Mateh Moshe (siman 450) says that this means there is a kiddushin, marriage on this night. Let us be cautious that we don't throw out this precious marriage ring and instead be busy with spoiled meat, and the foolishness of this world.

9. Torah studied at night (also on a weekday) has a special quality, and there is a specialness of the "winter nights."

Tzaddikim called the winter nights, די הייליגע ווינטער נעכט, 'The holy

The Ben Ish Chai zt'l told a mashal of two people who didn't have parnassah. They both decided that they should go collecting door to door. At the end of the day, the two men met. One of them had a very good meal prepared, the other had just

some scraps of old food. He asked, "What is your secret? How did you get such good foods? I went around the homes for hours, and this is all I received."

The other replied, "I went around just a short time,

winter nights', because one can acquire a lot of Torah on these long nights" (Darkei Chaim v'Shalom, Munkatz, 810).

The Ropshitzer zt'l would say after Succos, "After the *heilige teg* (the holy days of the yomim tovim) passed, now comes the *heilige necht* (the holy nights)."

Rebbe Pinchas Koritzer zt'l called these nights *די גאלדענע נעכט*, "Golden Nights." Rebbe Bunim of Peshischa zt'l would call these nights, *די גוטע פריינד*, "The good friend" (Nesivos Shalom).

Rebbe Yissachar Dov of Belz zy'a said in the name of the Ateres Tzvi of Zidichov zt'l "The winter nights have the kedushah of chol hamoed."

Also, the Rebbe of Zidichov said, "In the winter nights, before daybreak, one can accomplish [with his tefillos] the same as on Yom Kippur, during Neilah."

Rebbe Moshe Mordechai of Lelov zt'l said in the name of the Beis Aharon of Stolin zt'l that after the "holy days" pass, he feels very down. But then comes the long winter nights, and that calms him. The Rebbe, Reb Moshe Mordechai asked, "Why did the long nights calm the Beis Aharon? He learned day and night, winter and summer! What was special about the "winter nights"? It is because in the winter, it is cold, and it is hard to get out of bed. Therefore, these days were so precious to him, and to all tzaddikim. An avodah with toil is very precious to Hashem.

and I gained more. My secret is that I go around when people are eating, so they give me a portion from the foods they prepared for themselves."

The nimshal is that Friday night there are many hashpaos tovos, bounties, prepared in heaven. If we spend these nights with holiness, we can receive so much. We can receive much more than we receive at other times of the day.

There was a person who didn't have parnassah, and he told his plight to the Yismach Yisrael. The Yismach Yisrael zt'l knew that this person's store is opened on Shabbos Hashem Yerachem, and he knew that if he tells him to close the store, he won't listen to him because he will say that the main day for business is on Shabbos. Instead, the Yismach Yisrael told him, "I want to be a partner with you in your business."

The man was very happy with this offer, because he

understood that if the rebbe is his partner, Hashem will bestow his brachos on the business, and he will have parnassah.

The Yismach Yisrael told him, "Let's write up an agreement that one seventh of your business belongs to me, and that I receive 1/7th of the profits" (about 15%). The person wrote up the document.

Then the Yismach Yisrael said, "Now that I am a partner of 1/7th of the store, I have a right to ask that the store be closed on Shabbos."

With this story, we can explain the pasuk (Shemos 20:9) שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעֵשִׂיתָ כָּל מְלֹאכֶתְךָ, וְיוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שַׁבָּת לַה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, "Six days you work... and the seventh day is Shabbos for Hashem your G-d." Hashem is saying that He is a partner with all our business and work, and 1/7th is His. The day Hashem chose for Himself is Shabbos. If you will act on this day as Hashem wants, to make it holy with Torah and tefillah

and avodas Hashem - יום קדוש הוא מבואו ועד צאתו, a holy day from when it comes until when it leaves - you will merit that ועשית כל מלאכתך, that you will succeed with your work.

For our topic, we understand that if we will be cautious with the Friday nights, we will receive a brachah the entire week.

Learning Torah on Shabbos

In particular, it is important to be happy on Shabbos.

Pirkei Avos (6) states that one of the 48 traits needed to acquire Torah is שמחה, joy. The Maharal (*Derech Chaim Avos* 6) explains, “*Simchah* is a great level. When one is happy, he has perfection (*sheleimus*). And when he has perfection, he can receive the Torah, which is the perfection of man.”

The Ibn Ezra (in his *Igeres HaShabbos*) writes, “Every day the gates of comprehension open, but on Shabbos one hundred gates open.” Therefore, it is much easier to understand Torah on Shabbos than on a weekday. Likewise, the Chazon Ish *zt'l* writes that on Shabbos, one can understand the sections of Torah that he failed to understand during the week. Perhaps this is because people are happier on Shabbos, as Shabbos is called יום שמחתכם, “Your day of joy.” And joy is one of the 48 keys necessary for acquiring the Torah.

Torah is acquired with simchah, and Torah study itself makes us happy, as it states (*Tehillim* 19:9), פקודי ה' ישרים, “Hashem’s mitzvos are upright; they gladden the heart.” Nothing is more joyous than studying Torah and the performance of the mitzvos.¹⁰

10. Ohev Yisrael (*Vayikra, Likutim Chadashim*) writes:

"We see many *chassidim* who become *meshugah*, *chas veshalom*, or depressed. How did this happen? If you say it is from the Torah, we know that it is the opposite. Torah makes people happy. (This is the reason why it is forbidden for mourners to study Torah, and this is the reason we don't study Torah on Tisha b'Av.) If you say they became insane or depressed because they were cautious to perform the mitzvos, once again, we know that this isn't so, because (*Tehillim* 19:9), פְּקוּדֵי ה', 'ישרים משמחי לב', 'The mitzvos of Hashem are upright, causing the heart to rejoice.'"

The Ohev Yisrael answers that depression and insanity come when one strives to reach levels that are beyond him. But Torah and mitzvos themselves bring only happiness.

A father asked one of the roshei yeshivah of Tchebin, Reb Avraham Ganichovsky zt"l, to speak with his son and to encourage him to study Torah with hasmadah.

Reb Avraham told the bachur the following *mashal*:

A king, his aide, and three advisors strolled through a forest near the king's palace. The king became thirsty and sent his aide to the palace to get him water. The aide filled a large crystal cup with water and placed it on a diamond-studded wooden tray.

Rushing through the forest, the aide tripped, the water spilled, and the tray fell into a pit. The aide returned to the palace and brought another cup of water.

The king quenched his thirst and thanked his aide, but now the king asked his advisors to help him retrieve the tray from the pit. The pit was narrow, and it was impossible to climb inside.

One advisor said, "We can widen the pit. That way, we can get inside and retrieve the tray."

Another advisor spoke up, "That isn't a good idea. The tray might break while we dig. It is also possible that the tray will fall even deeper into this ditch. Instead, I suggest that we dig another hole next to the original pit. Then we can connect the two pits at the bottom and retrieve the tray."

The third advisor said, "That is a very costly and time-consuming

How to Maintain the Yomim Tovim Throughout the Year

We discussed the counsel of making a kabbalah tova. That draws the holiness of the yomim tovim for the entire year. There are some other counsels to hold onto the light and influence of the yomim tovim, which we will discuss here:

The Arugas HaBosem zt'l (Brachah וישכון ד"ה) writes, "On Rosh Hashanah, Hashem shines to people the attribute of fear. A person can draw

yiras Shamayim from this day for the entire year. During Aseres Yemei Teshuvah, a light of teshuvah shines, and especially on the holy day [of Yom Kippur]. Then it is Succos, the time of our happiness (זמן שמחתנו) and Hashem shines to the hearts of His nation to be happy when they serve Hashem, and when they study Torah and perform good deeds, and this influence can remain for the entire year.

"However, Hashem looked at the final generation, the poor and weak

venture. I recommend that we fill the pit with water. Then, the wooden tray will float up, and we can easily take it out."

Reb Avraham Ganichovsky explained to the *bachur* that everyone suffers; it is impossible to go through this world without hardship. There are methods that help overcome distress, but often, these approaches cause more harm than good. (In the mashal, this was expressed by widening the pit, which might cause them to lose the tray forever). And even when the attempts to attain happiness are helpful, the effort is enormous, and it is doubtful whether it is worth the time and effort. (In the mashal, this was represented with the counsel to dig another pit and then to connect them). But there is one foolproof way to acquire joy and tranquility in this world, and that is to study Torah. Torah is compared to water (and in the mashal, it is compared to pouring water into the pit until the tray comes up). When one is immersed in Torah, nothing will disturb him. His life will always be good.

generation, and he saw that these holy days will come and no one considers, in a sincere manner, to be aroused. When it is נעילת הדג, the holiday passes, the person makes a cheshbon hanefesh, and he thinks about how the holy days passed, and he didn't attain anything. What should he do now, that these days have already passed? It is impossible to bring the days back... But [Yaakov Avinu] established for generations that even after the days pass, when a person thinks that he wants to come back to these days, he receives the light of those days in his thoughts."

This is what happened to Yaakov Avinu. He passed

Har HaMoriah, and then he asked himself, "How did I pass the place where my parents prayed, and I didn't pray there?" He turned to go back, and the place of Har HaMoriah came to him, as Chazal (Sanhedrin 95b) tell us. So, too, when a person desires the days that passed, they come to him. This can happen any day, throughout the year.

This can explain the minhag of several communities to continue the customs of Tishrei until Shabbos Berieshis. On this Shabbos, they still dip challah in honey, and they keep the white parochos hanging over the aron kodesh.¹¹ This is to show that we can still draw back

11. Reb Moshe Gross z'l from Switzerland, wanted to be in Tel Aviv with the Belzer Rav (Reb Aharon of Belz zt'l) for Simchas Torah, but the trip took longer than expected, and he only arrived to the shores of Haifa on Hoshana Rabba in the afternoon. He was forced to spend Simchas Torah in Haifa and only came to the Belzer Rav for Shabbos Bereishis.

It's a Belzer custom to sing the *piyut* אמונים אשר נאספו, three times on Shabbos Bereishis. (The *piyut* is printed in *machzorim* before the *Shemonah*

the holidays, even after the yomim tovim passed.

Rebbe Menachem Mendel of Rimanov zt'l had another counsel to connect the spirituality of the yomim tovim to the entire year, and he would often say it to his chasidim:

During the yomim tovim, Hakadosh Baruch Hu shines a great light on all Yidden. This light sharpens their minds to understand Torah and to succeed in avodas Hashem. But when the yom tov passes, the light leaves them. But if the person is wise, he will learn a lot of Torah the moment the yom tov passes. This will help that the great light will remain with him, and he can benefit from it the entire

year to come close to Hashem (Kol Yaakov, Emor).

If he didn't benefit from this counsel at the moment the yom tov passed, it still isn't too late. Reb Chaim Palagi (sefer Chaim 36) writes, "We have a kabbalah that the way you serve Hashem on the twelve days after yom tov, that is how it will be always throughout the year. Therefore, there is an old custom to be holy on these days. People gather in their homes on these twelve days to review what they learned - each person, according to what he studies - and this is a wonderful segulah that Hashem will help him the entire year. Wherever he turns, in Torah, in chassidus, and also in business, he will succeed."

Esrei of Shacharis, Shmini Atzeres.) While the chassidim sang this song, Reb Moshe was lamenting over the fact that he didn't arrive earlier.

When they finished singing, the Rebbe whispered into his ears, "Shabbos Bereishis is also associated with the *heilige teg*"- Shabbos Bereishis is also part of the holy yomim tovim.

The Chida (Moreh b'Ezra 298) writes, "After the yom tov, and it is Cheshvon, one should be strong with yiras

Shamayim and with learning Torah l'shmah, because it is the beginning of the year.¹² This is a good sign for the

12. There is a wonderful lesson from the Divrei Yisrael zt'l, teaching us the depths of the story of Kayin and Hevel. The Torah tells us (4:2-7) וַיְהִי בְּעֵת הַיָּמִים וַיָּבֵא כַיִן מִפְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה מִנְחָה לַה', וְהָבֵל גַּם הוּא מִבְּכֹרוֹת צֹאנוֹ וּמִחֻלְבֵּהֶן וַיִּשַׁע ה' אֶל הָבֵל וְאֶל מִנְחָתוֹ, וְאֶל כַּיִן וְאֶל מִנְחָתוֹ לֹא שָׁעָה וַיִּתֵּר לְכַיִן מִזֶּה וַיִּפְּלוּ פָנָיו: וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל כַּיִן לָמָּה חָרָה לְךָ וְלָמָּה נָפְלוּ פָנֶיךָ: הֲלוֹא אִם תֵּיטִיב שְׂאֵת "Kayin worked the soil. Now it came to pass at the end of days, that Kayin brought of the fruit of the soil an offering to Hashem. Hevel, too, brought of the firstborn of his flocks and of their fattest, and Hashem turned to Hevel and to his offering. But to Kayin and to his offering He did not turn, and it annoyed Kayin exceedingly, and his countenance fell. Hashem said to Kayin, "Why are you annoyed, and why has your countenance fallen? Is it not so that if you improve, it will be forgiven for you? If you do not improve, however, at the entrance, the sin is lying, and to you its longing, but you can rule over it."

The Divrei Yisrael explains:

Tzaddikim taught that the main service to Hashem is at the beginning, as it states (Shemos 13:2) קִדְּשׁ לִי כָל בְּכוֹר, sanctify all beginnings. How a person is at the beginning of the day, that is how he will be the entire day. As there is a saying, "the body follows the head" (גופא בתא רישא גריר). This is the reason the chachamim established that we should begin the day with מוֹדָה אֵי, immediately upon awakening in the morning. The first thing we say should be kedushah. This is the meaning of לִפְתַּח חֲסֵאת רִבִּץ. The yetzer hara's primary desire is to ruin the לִפְתַּח, the beginnings. When the yetzer hara succeeds to disrupt the beginning, the entire day is now in the yetzer hara's hands. But וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל בוֹ, you can rule over the yetzer hara. If you will be strong and begin the day in a good way, you can rule over the yetzer hara.

The difference between Kayin and Hevel was with this subject.

entire year. Now, it is close to the Aseres Yemei teshuvah, and a person has to show that his teshuvah was sincere, and it wasn't just a show, chas ve'shalom.¹³

Heven's korban was מִבְּכֹרוֹת צֵאֵנוּ וּמִחֻלְבָּהּ, the firstborns of his flock. This means he would sanctify the beginning of each day. Thereby, his tefillos were good and pure, every day. וַיִּשָּׁע ה' אֶל הַקֵּל וַאֲל מִנְחָתוֹ, Hashem accepted his tefillos and his avodos because it was a pure prayer with good kavanah. But about Kayin it states וַיִּזְנוּ הָיָה עֲבֹד וַיְהִי מִשָּׁן יָמִים, at the end of the day, he brought a korban to Hashem. This means he first worked, and then later in the day, he went on to pray. This is also alluded to in the words וַיִּבָּא בֹן מִפְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה מִנְחָה לֵּה, which means he davened *Minchah*, a tefillah said at the end of the day. Being that he began the day working the field, also when he prayed, his mind kept going back to think about the work. This is the reason Hashem didn't accept his service.

The Divrei Yisrael writes, "It is known that the Torah is eternal. In every generation there are people like Kayin and there are people like Hevel. If a person begins the day with the empty matters of this world, the entire day will be that way. Even when he goes to pray, it will be מִפְּרִי הָאֲדָמָה, which means מִן הַגִּרּוּעַ, a poor tefillah (see Rashi). His mind will be on the empty matters of this world, as this is known. But when he begins the day with avodas Hashem, with Torah and tefillah, אֶחָד הַמְרַבָּה וְאֶחָד הַמִּמְעִיט, whether he does a lot or a little, afterwards when he goes to work, he won't be so involved in it, and he will do business with emunah and bitachon. This is understood to the wise."

13. A person who owns real estate in Golders Green, London, was cautious to rent his apartments to people he trusted would pay the rent. If the person applying for the apartment appeared to be someone he couldn't trust, he would find an excuse why not to rent it out to him.

But there was a time, ten to twenty years ago, when there were many empty apartments in Golders Green area, and he realized

If he will throw off the yoke of heaven now, and be lax in avodas Hashem, it won't be good, chas v'shalom.

Therefore, do the opposite and make a good sign for

the entire year. Run like the mighty to study Torah and to perform the mitzvos..."

One night, Reb Eizek Reb Yekel's of Krakow (*niftar* 370

that he couldn't be too picky. If he found a potential tenant, he accepted him, even if he feared that he might not pay.

At least with one of his tenants, his fears transpired, because this tenant didn't pay his rent.

The landlord brought him to court, but he feared that he might not win because in England, the renter is favored in court over the landlord. The judge asked the tenant why he didn't pay the rent. He replied, "He leased me a deficient apartment. The heating and the air conditioning didn't work, there were also problems with the plumbing and with the electricity. I asked the landlord to fix these accessories, but my requests fell on deaf ears. I paid handymen to fix these matters. Why should I pay the rent, too?"

The landlord feared he would lose the case because the tenant spoke about something that couldn't be disproven, especially, since English laws favor the tenant over the landlord.

However, the judge asked the tenant, "Did you pay rent for at least one month? If you didn't even pay rent the first month, that proves you never intended to pay rent." He didn't pay rent, even the first month, so the court obligated him to pay up entirely.

Reb Elchanan Halprin *zt'l* of Radumishla and later the Rav of Golders Green, told this story and said that it is a lesson in *kabбалos tovot*. Sometimes people have excuses why they didn't keep their *kabбалos*. But the court of Heaven will ask, "Did you keep your *kabбалah* at least once? Did you begin the year adhering to the *kabбалos* you took on? If you didn't even begin with your *kabбалos*, that shows you weren't serious, and you never truly intended to keep them.

years ago, ת"ג) dreamed that there was a large treasure under a bridge. So, he went to the bridge, and a police officer stopped him and asked him what he was doing. Reb Eizik told him the truth. "I dreamed that there's a great treasure under this bridge."

The officer replied, "Why do you take dreams seriously? I also had a dream. I dreamt there's a great treasure under the oven of a Yid called Reb Eizik Reb Yekel's of Krakow. I'm not crazy. I didn't go seeking a Reb Eizik Reb Yekel's in Krakow. It was a dream, and dreams don't mean anything."

Reb Eizik heard what the policeman said and was shocked. The police dreamed that there was a treasure in *his* home! He had mentioned his name. He didn't tell the goy that he was Eizik Reb Yekel's. He immediately went home, dug under his oven, found a great treasure there, and became very wealthy.

With a portion of the money, he built a beautiful shul in Krakow called "Reb Eizik Reb Yekel's Shul."

Tzaddikim tell this story, and they teach various lessons from it.

One year, after Yom Kippur, the Imrei Chaim of Viznitz ז"ל (*Likutei Imrei Chaim, Motzei Yom Kippur*) repeated this story and explained that people think that Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are the treasure because on these days we reach high spiritual levels. But when these awesome days arrive, they discover that they have the treasure within *themselves*. They have so much potential. They have so much talent. There is so much that they can do.

This is the *avodah* after the yomim tovim pass, to find the treasures that are within you.

Never Lose Hope

Towards the end of the parsha, it states (6:5-7), וירא ה' כי

רבה רעת האדם בארץ וכל יצר מחשבת לבו רק רע כל היום וינחם ה' כי עשה את האדם בארץ ויתעצב אל לבו, ויאמר ה' "Hashem saw that the evil of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of his heart was only evil all the time. Hashem regretted that He had made man upon the earth, and He became grieved in His heart. Hashem said "I will destroy man..."

The Chebiner Rav *zt'l* heard a wonderful explanation to these words following the path of *remez*. He heard the lesson *איש מפי איש* from the Chozeh of Lublin *zt'l*:

וירא ה' כי רבה רעת האדם בארץ, Hashem sees the many bad deeds that people do, but Hashem isn't angry with them because Hashem understands וכל יצר מחשבות לבו, רק רע כל היום, that people have a *yetzer hara*. Therefore, their aveiros aren't really their fault. Who can stand up against the strong *yetzer hara*?

In fact, וינחם ה', Hashem regrets creating the *yetzer hara*. As the Gemara (*Succah* 52) lists four things that Hashem regrets, and one of them is that He created the *yetzer hara*.¹⁴

14. The grandson of Rebbe Henoch of Alexander *zt'l* had his bar mitzvah on Shabbos Bereishis. The Rebbe of Alexander told his grandson that בראשית is *gematriya* תרי"ג.

The bright bar mitzvah *bachur* immediately asked, "But בראשית also has a ו!" The letters of בראשית, without the וי"ן are *gematriya* תרי"ג, but there's a *shin* there, too.

The Rebbe replied that ו is *gematriya* יצר, the *yetzer hara*. בראשית implies that when one rids himself of the יצר הרע, he will be able to keep the תרי"ג mitzvos.

The Rebbe added that this is the meaning of the phrase we say on Yom Kippur, לברית הבט ואל תפן ליצר, You can keep the תרי"ג mitzvos (which are *gematriya* ברי"ת with the *kollel*) when you don't pay attention to

However, ויתעצב אל לבו, if a person will be sad and upset that he has so many *aveiros* and he loses hope, then ויאמר ה'

אמחה את האדם אשר בראתי Hashem says He will destroy man.

Because man must be happy, no matter what

the *yetzer hara*.

The snake said to Chavah, "Did Hashem say that you may not eat from all trees in the garden?" The Chidushei HaRim said that אף can be translated, "So what?" The snake told Chavah, "So what if Hashem commanded you? Does that mean you have to listen?" The Chidushei HaRim explains that the *yetzer hara* continues to use this method in our generation, to cool off people's *yiras shamayim*. He comes to a person and says, "who says that it's so important to listen to this law? Is it really so important? What will happen if you don't listen?" With this conniving approach, he causes people to sin and transgress Hashem's will.

In this week's *parsha* it says, ויאמר ד' אלקים לא טוב היות האדם לבדו אעשה לו עזר, כנגדו. The Akeidah explains (בדרך רמז) that the עזר, the helper, is referring to the *yetzer hara*. Hashem says, לא טוב היות האדם לבדו, it isn't good when man is alone, without struggles and challenges. The value of our deeds are so much greater when we are confronted with challenges and we overcome them to serve Hashem.

Rebbe Yochanan of Stolin *zy'a* told the following parable: An artist drew a beautiful painting that sold for a lot of money. He also made photocopies and sold those for a fraction of the price of the original. Why? The copies are just as beautiful as the original. Why are they worth so much less? The answer is: Art isn't only about how beautiful it is. It's about appreciating the effort that went into the painting, the artist's talent, training, and energies.

Rebbe Yochanon of Stolin *zt'l* said that the same is with *avodas Hashem*. It isn't just the deeds that Hashem wants from us. The heart and effort that one puts into the mitzvos are what make them truly valuable.

happens. Sometimes we fall, we aren't perfect, but that isn't the problem, as much as the feeling of despair that comes from it. A person should forget about the past, and to forge forward with his avodas Hashem.¹⁵

The first letter of the Torah is a בי"ת, which is closed from all three sides and opened in front to hint that we don't think about what was. Looking further, "our focus is on making the future better".

Hashem asked Kayin (4:6) למָה נָפְלוּ פָנֶיךָ, "Why did your face fall?" The Sforno explains, "Whenever there's a problem that has a solution,

it isn't proper to be upset about what happened, rather to fix it in the future." Hashem was telling Kayin that if he didn't bring a good *korban*, that could be fixed in the future. He can bring a better *korban* next time. Why should he be sad?

After the sin of the eitz hadaas, eating from the Tree of Knowledge, it states (3:7), וַיַּתְּפֵרוּ עָלֵי תַאֲנָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם חֲגוּרוֹת, "They sewed fig leaves and made themselves belts." The Divrei Shmuel of Slonim zt'l said that belts are an expression for strengthening oneself. (As we say, אוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל, בגבורה, Hashem girds us with strength). After his *aveirah*, he didn't permit himself to feel down.

15. The Yesod HaAvodah (vol.2, 6) wrote in a letter, "Years ago, during a war, the general received a letter saying that the enemy had broken through their military strongholds. The general became very down, and he told his wife the news.

"She replied, 'I also just received a letter. It came just this minute. It tells of a greater loss than what you told me.'

'Really! What does it say?'

'It says that in addition to losing that fort, you lost your morale (your מוֹדָט) and that is the greatest loss.'

He girded himself with ready to serve Hashem
confidence and joy and was again.¹⁶

16. The Holy Ruzhiner *zy'a* told the following story:

A Russian Czar suffered from phobias, and when he traveled, he had soldiers scout the area ahead of him, to make certain that his enemies weren't waiting in ambush to harm him. When the Czar met up with his soldiers, they would tell him that the area was safe, and the Czar would ride on.

Once, a soldier checked an area in a forest, and he saw that it was safe for the Czar to pass through. He waited at his post for the Czar's arrival.

The sun was shining brightly, and there was a lake nearby. The soldier thought he had time before the Czar arrived, so he bathed in the lake and drank the water.

The Czar arrived, and still undressed, the soldier rushed to his post to tell the Czar that the coast was clear and that the Czar could pass safely.

The Czar barked, "Don't you know it is disrespectful to stand before me without clothing?"

The soldier replied, "I know. But I figured why should my negligence of leaving my post cause the Czar to wait until I dress? So I came here as quickly as I could to tell the Czar that he can continue his travels."

The *nimshal* is, we shouldn't allow past sins to prevent us from serving Hashem. Even if we became undressed and disgraced because of our sins, this doesn't permit us to be lax from doing our service before Hashem as we are obligated to do.

Adam said to Hashem (3:10-11), *את קולך שמעתי בגן ואירא כי עירום אנכי ואחבא*, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I am undressed, so I hid."

He was also spiritually naked because of his sin, and he didn't feel

worthy to stand before Hashem.

Hashem replied, *מי הגיד לך כי עירום אתה*, "Who told you that you are naked?"

Hashem was saying, "Who told you that this is a valid reason not to stand before Me? When I summon for you, you must come. Even if you are naked due to sins, that doesn't exempt you from doing what is incumbent upon you to do."