

בַּעֲדֵהשִׁי"ת

The Way of Emunah

Collected Thoughts
on the Weekly Parshah

From

**Rabbi Meir Isamar
Rosenbaum shlita**

Devarim



The Way of Emunah

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Parshas Devarim



A Bracha According to the Names of the Parshios/Daily Tochacha/Learning With a “Full Mouth”/The Bracha Increases in Accordance With the Klala/Recognizing that Hardship Comes From Hashem/The Dayanim Accept the Command/One Who is Worried What Others Will Say Causes Destruction/Stealing from a Non-Jew is Also Stealing/The Staff and Suitcase are Ready/Know What to Answer/Moshiach Will Come to a Lowly Generation/Following the Voice/The Only Solution is Tears/
Gluttony Arouses the Yeitzer Hara/Canceling Taivoh While Eating

Bain Hametzarim

Comfort From the Future Redemption/A Siyum to Arouse Brotherly Love/Days of Forgiveness and Atonement/Our Avodah Would be a Sin for Our Forefathers

אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן וְגו' (א, א)

These are the words that Moshe spoke to all of Yisroel on the opposite side of the Yarden... (1:1)

A Bracha According to the Names of the Parshios:

Sefer Gan Yosef relates that a merchant once came to Rav Meir of Premishlan zy”a and complained that he had rented a

store from a Poritz for many years, and now someone else was trying to outbid him for the contract and take away his livelihood.

Rav Meir told him, “I will give you a *bracha* according to the

names of the Parshios. ‘*Eileh hadevarim*’ – if you have a ‘*din u’devarim*’ (monetary dispute) with your friend. ‘*Va’eschonon*’ – daven to Hashem for success. ‘*Eikev*’ – but before this. ‘*Re’eh*’ – look with foresight and rent a different store. ‘*Shoftim*’ – then call him to court. ‘*Ki Seitzei*’ – when you leave the old store. ‘*Ki Savo*’ – and when you come to the new store. ‘*Netzavim*’ – you will stand in a good place. ‘*Vayeilech*’ – you will then go to a good situation. ‘*Ha’azinu*’ – listen to my words. ‘*V’Zos Habracha*’ – this is my blessing to you.”

Daily Tochacha:

Rav Leib Moshiaich of Polnoah zy”a would deliver lectures every day for his congregation, and he would say fiery words of

rebuke that shook the people up very much. One day, the Toldos Yaakov Yosef zy”a was there, and he saw how frightened and sad the people looked. He turned to Rav Leib and said, “Why do you have to rebuke the people every single day? Don’t we see that even though Moshe Rabenu had a lot of things to chastise the nation about, he only actually did so right before his death?”

Rav Leib replied, “On the contrary, that is a proof that I must give *mussar* every day. Chazal say (Avos 2:10) that one should repent one day before his death. Since we don’t know when we will die, we must do *teshuva* every day. So too, since I don’t know when I will die, I must rebuke the nation every day as if it were my last day on earth and my last chance to do so.”

בְּעֵבֶר הַיָּרְדֵּן וְגו' הוֹאִיל מֹשֶׁה בְּאֵר אֶת הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת לֵאמֹר (א, ה)

On the opposite side of the Yarden... Moshe commenced to explain this Torah saying. (1:5)

Learning With a “Full Mouth”:

The word “*laymor*” (saying) seems to be unneeded. The Beer Mayim Chaim explains it’s meaning as follows:

The Gemara says (Eruvin 54A) that Bruriah (the wife of Rav Meir and daughter of Rav Chanaya ben Teradyon) saw a student learning Torah silently. She asked him: “Doesn’t it say (2 Shmuel 23:5): ‘Fully set forth and protected.’ If Torah is fully set forth with all 248 limbs, then it will be protected. If not, it will not be protected.” (She was saying that if one learns out loud, using his mouth, the entire body – all 248 limbs – will feel it, and the Torah will last and not be forgotten. If one does not say the words out loud, however, the Torah will not last.)

The Gemara adds that Rav Eliezer had a student who learned silently. After three years, he forgot his learning. Shmuel told Rav Yehuda that we see that one should learn out loud and that this is a *zechus* for a long life from the verse (Mishlei 4:22): “For they are life for those who find them (*l’motza’eihem*), and for all his flesh a healing.” The word should not be read “*l’motza’eihem*” (for those who find them), but rather, “*l’motzi’eihem*” (for those who emit them from the mouth).

Accordingly, the *pasuk* is saying that Torah must be “*laymor*” – to say – meaning that **one should say words of Torah with a full mouth so as to remember them and to merit a long life.**

ה' אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵכֶם יִסֶּף עָלֵיכֶם כָּכֶם וְגו' וַיְבָרֶךְ אֶתְכֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לָכֶם (א, יז)

May Hashem, the G-d of your forefathers add to you a thousand times like you, and may He bless you, as He spoke... (1:11)

The Bracha Increases in Accordance with the Klala:

The Darchei Teshuva zy”a notes that this *pasuk* uses the word “*dibbur*”, which always indicates speaking in a harsh manner (Tanchuma 96:13). He asks that since this verse is a blessing, shouldn’t it use the word “*amira*”, which indicates speaking in a gentle manner?

He answers by citing the verse (Tehillim 90:15): “Cause us to

rejoice according to the days that You afflicted us, the years that we saw evil May Your works appear to Your servants...” This teaches us that in the future, Hashem will bring joy to Klal Yisroel in accordance with the difficulties and pain we suffered through during the many years of exile. Thus, the *pasuk* in our Parshah is saying that Hashem will bless “as He spoke” – meaning that we will be blessed in accordance with the amount of harshness we experienced.

לֹא תִפְדּוּ פְּנִים בַּמִּשְׁפָּט וְגו' (א, יז)

You shall not favor persons in judgment... (1:17)

Recognizing that Hardship Comes From Hashem:

(Sefer Emes L'Yaakov) explains this *pasuk* by saying that when some people are struck with an illness

The Rebbe of Blendov zy”a or any form of difficulty, they

consider it “natural”, rather than recognizing that it is a result of their sins. They say that “the same thing could happen to anyone.”

The Torah is hinting to this when it says not to be “*sakiru panim b'mishpat*.” The word “*sakiru*” has a root of “*nachri*” (stranger). Thus, the *pasuk* is saying that if someone finds

himself in a situation of *mishpat* (harsh judgment), he should not say that the same thing could happen to any stranger, and it is only by happenstance that it happened to him. Rather, one should recognize that Hashem sent this form of suffering specifically for him. As the Gemara says (Brachos 5B), when one faces a difficulty, he should investigate his actions.

וְאֶצְוֶה אֶת שֹׁפְטֵיכֶם בְּעֵת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר שְׁמַע בֵּין אֶחָיֶכֶם וְגו' (א, טז)

And I commanded your judges at that time, saying, “Hear (disputes) between your brothers... (1:16)

The Dayanim Accept the Command:

The Agrah D’Kallah writes that the word “*laymor*” (to say) indicates that while a judge is hearing a case, he must say out loud that he is having in mind to fulfill the mitzvah of judging his nation fairly (Vayikrah 19:15). Thus, the *pasuk* is saying that he is

commanded “at that time to say.” At the time that he is judging the case, he is commanded to say clearly that he is having in mind to fulfill the mitzvah of judging with fairness.

One Who is Worried What Others Will Say Causes Destruction:

In the town of Rav Yechezkel of Kuzmir zy”a, there lived a powerful but very disagreeable man, who held the position of Rosh Hakahal. One time, Rav Yechezkel asked the Rov of the city to pronounce a ruling that this powerful man strongly objected to. The Rov was frightened and said, “But what will people say?”

Rav Yechezkel told him, “Don’t you know that the Bais Hamikdosh was destroyed because of something like that? Chazal say (Gitin 56A) that the humility of Rav Zechariah ben Avkilos caused the destruction because he was worried what people would say if they brought a blemished animal as a *korban* (see the entire story in the Gemara there).”

is Also Stealing:

A non-Jew once knocked on the door of the Rov of Lodzh, Rav Eliyahu Chaim Meisel zt”l, and asked to speak with him in private.

The gentile told him that he had been involved in the Polish uprising and had served as a district treasurer. After the war, about 8,000 rubles remained in his possession. He did not want to deposit this money in the bank because it would look suspicious, so he hid it in the basement of his house. From time to time, he would go down to the basement in the middle of the night to check if the money was still in its place. This went on for several years.

He said, “A few days ago, I went down to the basement as usual, and I was horrified to see

Stealing from a Non-Jew

that the money was not there!”

He continued to say, “I have a Jewish neighbor who has always been poor. Recently, he began to live like a wealthy man. He bought new furniture and clothing, etc. I asked him how he suddenly had so much money, and he claimed that his wife’s aunt had died and left him a large inheritance. However, I suspect that he stole my money.”

The Rov said, “Come back to me tomorrow.”

He immediately summoned this Jewish man and told him, “I heard that you have become wealthy. Why haven’t I received any donation from you for the poor people of our city?”

The man replied, “You are right. From now on, I will give generous donations to charity.”

The Rov then asked, “How did you obtain this wealth?”

The man then told him his story of a wealthy aunt who died and left him a fortune. The Rov asked, “And she had no heirs besides for you?”

The men began to hem and haw, and the Rov realized that his story was fabricated. He then told him, “The reason I summoned you is because I am worried about you. I heard someone say that you paid for merchandise in the market with counterfeit money. You know that there is a severe penalty for this.”

The Jew’s face turned white. He realized that the money he had stolen from his neighbor must have been counterfeit. He revealed the truth to the Rov – that he had stolen the money

from his neighbor-s basement and had no idea that it was fake. He ran home and brought all the rest of the money to the Rov, who then told him, **“From now on, be very careful not to touch anything that isn’t yours. This is not counterfeit money, but it also isn’t yours!”**

The next day, the Rov returned the money to the gentile.

The Staff and Suitcase are Ready:

It is said that when Rav Shmelke of Nikolsberg *zy”a* served as Rov of the city of Nikolsberg, his walking stick and suitcase were always hanging on the wall in the his *bais din*.

When the leaders of the community asked him why he

had these two objects hanging on the wall, he answered, “In my courtroom, there is no favoritism. I treat everyone equally and rule according to halacha. If any of the community leaders don’t like my ruling in a case they are involved with and want to fire me, I am prepared to get up and leave my position at any time. My stick and suitcase are always ready and I can pick up and leave the city immediately if I need to.”

Know What to Answer:

Two men who had a monetary dispute once came to Rav Shmuel Salant *zt”l* for a *din Torah*. When one man was found liable, he exploded with anger and said, “I will break every window in the Rov’s house“!

Rav Shmuel looked at him and

said, “What do you think will happen then? Do you think I’ll sit by quietly and not do anything“?

These words scared the man and he ran away.

וְטַפְכֶּם אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְתֶּם לְבָנֵי יְהוָה וּבְנֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדְעוּ וְגו' הֲמָה יָבֵאוּ
שָׂמָּה וְלָקְחָם אֶתְנַנָּה וְהֵם יִירְשׁוּהָ (א, לט)

And your little ones, whom you said will be prey, and your children, who on that day did not know good and evil they will go there and I will give it to them, and they will possess it. (1:39)

Moshiach Will Come to a Lowly Generation:

Rav Mordechai Chaim of Slonim zy”a (Maamar Mordechai, Chelek 2, page 171) related: “Rav Hersch of Ziditchoiv zy”a once was sitting with his son-in-law and nephew of Rav Yehuda Tzvi of Razla zy”a, who was greatly bemoaning the spiritual descent of the generations, as it is clear that we are getting lower and lower. He cried and said, ‘Who will Moshiach be coming to

After he left, someone asked Rav Shmuel what he would have done, and he answered, **”I would have went out to hire a worker to make me new window.”**

already?’

“His father-in-law, the Ziditchoiver Rebbe, lifted his head and said, ‘And your little ones, whom you said will be prey, and your children, who on that day did not know good and evil.’ He was saying that Moshiach will come to a lowly generation, that can’t even tell the difference between good and bad. **He will specifically come to a generation like that.”**

Following the Voice:

The *pasuk* states (Devarim 31:17):
“And you will say on that day:
Because G-d is not in our midst
we have found all these bad
things. And I will surely hide
My face...” The Meforshim ask
that saying that “Hashem is not
in our midst” seems to be a form
of admitting and regretting our
sins. If so, why will He hide his
face from us?

Sefer Gedolos Hatzadikim
quotes Rav Menachem Mendel
of Vorka zy”a as answering with
a parable of some children who
were playing. One of them hid in
a hiding place and called to his
friend to try to find him. If the
friend is smart, he will follow
the voice and thus find his friend.
So too, when Hashem hides
from us, He calls out and says, ‘I
will hide My face...’ If a person
is smart, he will follow this holy

voice to find Hashem.

The Only Solution is Tears:

The *pasuk* in Tehillim (42:4)
states: “My tears were like bread
to me day and night when they
said to me all day, ‘Where is
your G-d’”.

Sefer Toldos Yaakov Yitzchok
explains with a *moshol* of a king
who was traveling with his
guards. Suddenly, a man came
towards them and blocked the
road. He said that he would not
allow the king to pass, no matter
what.

The king asked him, “Oh
really. And what will you do if I
order my men to beat you?”

He answered, “I won’t be able
to fight back at all, for I am only
one man against an army of

guards, but I can tell you this: I will scream and cry, and I won't stop the entire time I am being beaten."

Thus, Dovid Hamelech says that his tears were "his bread,

both day and night. While in *golus*, as our enemies surround us, we aren't strong enough to fight them. All we can do is cry constantly to Hashem. That is our only answer to them.

רַב לָכֶם סָב אֶת הָהָר וּגו' פָּנוּ לָכֶם צָפֹנָה (ב, ג)

You have circled this mountain long enough; turn northward. (2:3)

Gluttony Arouses the Yeitzer Hara:

Sefer Ilna D'Chayai explains the words "*rov lachem*" to mean "you have had enough *lachem*". In other words, you have spent too much time satisfying your desires for your own pleasures. "*Sov*" – the "*sibah*" (reason) for this is "*es hahar hazeh*", this mountain, i.e., the *yeitzer hara* (which is referred to as a mountain, see Sukkah 52A). Through eating to fulfill one's hedonistic desires, one arouses his *yeitzer hara*, which causes his mind to become

impure.

The *pasuk* continues "*p'nu lachem*" - turn your "*lachem*" around. Turn away your desires for your personal pleasures. "*Tzafonah*" (northward) – if you do this, you will go to the "north", which is a reference to reaching a level of *yiras Hashem* (see Iyov 37:22).

Canceling Taivoh While Eating:

Sefer Pri Yesha (page 370) relates

that the Bais Aharon of Karlin zy”a once said about a certain distinguished young man, **“During davening, he follows us step by step. And when it comes time to eat, he becomes a kichel.”** His intent was that his *avodah* of eating was not on the same level as his *avodah* of davening. He added that the *pasuk* says (Devarim 2:6): *“Ochel tisberu b’kesef”* (literally: “you shall buy food from them for money”), which

he translated to mean: “One must break (*tisberu*) his desires for food and the like with “*kesef*” – with something that a person yearns for (*nichsaf*).

Similarly, the Magid of Mezheritzh zy”a explains the *pasuk* of *“ochel b’kesef tishbareini”* (ibid:28) to mean that if one is “*b’kesef*”, meaning that he yearns for something like food, he should break this desire.

Bais Hametzarim

Comfort From the Future Redemption:

Sefer Siach Sarfei Kodesh relates that Rav Henech of Alexander zy”a once made a Siyum Masechta during the “Nine Days” (between Rosh Chodesh Av and Tisha B’Av). During the *seudah*, he said, “In the old days, during this time of year, the

balhabatim would be depressed and anguished over the fact that our Bais Hamikdosh was destroyed and we can no longer go there to offer *korbanos*. Today, however, the *chasidim* enjoy festive meals because of their strong *emunah* that the redemption is near. They believe that just like there once was a Bais Hamikdosh, there soon will

be a Bais Hamikdosh.”

He added, “After Ashmedai (the king of the demons) threw Shlomo Hamelech out of his palace (see Gittin 68B), Shlomo came to a village and told the people there who he was. When the residents heard who was there, they all surrounded him and they slaughtered an ox and brought all kinds of delicacies in his honor.

“After the ate, the village leader told his family that Shlomo Hamelech was in town and how he had been banished from his throne. He told them, ‘Look at how the tides can turn. Look how much this man is suffering.’

“When Shlomo heard what he said, he recalled how much honor and glory he used to have, and he was full of anguish. He

was so upset that he couldn’t eat any of the delicacies the villagers continued to bring to him.

“Shlomo then continued on his wanderings and came to another city, where he met a pious, poor man. When the man heard that this was Shlomo Hamelech, he was very happy to see him. He comforted him by saying, ‘You once were Shlomo the King and you will again be Shlomo the King. You may have temporarily lost your power but you will get it back one day.’

“These words made Shlomo very happy. The poor man invited him to a small repast in his home, and they ate together. This upright man revived Shlomo’s spirit with a few words more than the wealthy residents of the other village did with all their fine food. Regarding this Shlomo said (Mishlei 17:1): ‘Coarse

bread with pleasantness is good.”

The Rebbe concluded, **“That is how we should think during the Bain Hametzarim. We should console ourselves by remembering that just like there once was a Bais Hamikdosh, there will again be one.”**

A Siyum to Arouse Brotherly Love:

Sefer Siach Sarfei Kodesh also quotes the Chidushei Harim zy”a as explaining that the reason for the custom of making a *siyum* during the Nine Days is because the Bais Hamikdosh was destroyed because of *sinas chinam* (Yoma 9B) and sharing in a *seudah* for the honor of Torah

can rectify this sin by increasing brotherly love. This concept is seen from the Gemara (Shabbos 118B), which relates that Abaya said that when a young scholar completed a Masechta, he made a festive holiday for the Rabbanan. **Creating such unity through Torah is a means to fix the sin of senseless hatred.**

Days of Forgiveness and Atonement:

The Maharsha (Chidushei Agados on Bechoros 8B) writes that just like the 21 days from Rosh Hashanah until Hoshana Rabbah are a time to atone for sin, so too **the 21 days between the 17th of Tamuz and Tisha B’Av are a time when sins are forgiven because suffering and pain atones for transgressions (Sanhedrin 37B).**

Our Avodah Would be a Sin for Our Forefathers:

The verse (Eicha 5:7) states: “Our fathers have sinned and are no more, and we have borne their iniquities.” My ancestor, Rav Mord’chele of Nadvorna zy”a (Sefer Maamar Mordechai) explains this verse with a story that is said about his grandfather, Rav Uren Leib of Premishlan zy”a.

Rav Uren Leib would say that he woke up to say Tikkun Chatzos, but while he was reciting it, he was already yearning to learn Mishnayos. While he was learning Mishnayos, he was already thinking about learning Zohar. And while he was learning Zohar, he was yearning to learn Gemara. And while he was learning Gemara, he was thinking about saying Tehillim.

And while he was reciting Tehillim, he was anticipating davening Shacharis. He said that he did much *teshuva* to atone for finding it difficult to complete one mitzvah before thinking about the next.

Accordingly, the *pasuk* can be understood as saying that our forefathers “sinned” because they were “no more”, meaning that they considered themselves to be nothing and treated a small sin like this – thinking about one mitzvah will performing another – like a major transgression. And we “bear their iniquities”, meaning that for us, such a thing would be a source of pride to bear. **If only we could “sin” the way our holy fathers did as a result of their great desire for Torah and mitzvos!**



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