



Torah U'Tefilah

A Collection of Inspiring Insights

בס"ד

ט' אלול
9 Elul

Besamei HaTorah... Beneath the Surface

By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

כי תצא למלחמה על איביך ונתנו ה' אלקיך בידך (כא"י)

When you will go out to war against your enemies

and Hashem your G-d will deliver him into your hand (21:10)

Chachmei Yisroel explain that the words כי תצא, When you will go out, in this Posuk, are written in the singular tense, and this is not a coincidence. A moral lesson is hidden here; that it is only possible to overcome our enemies when Israel is united – when all of Israel stands confronting the enemy בלב אחד, with one heart as one man. Our Chachamim have explained this concept elsewhere as well (Yerushalmi, Pei'ah 1:1): The generation of Achav all worshipped strange gods (עבודה זרה). Yet they were victorious in battle because there was no dispute amongst them. (Parperaos LaTorah)

Parshah Thoughts - Ideas and Reflections - Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

The Parshah begins (21:10): "When you will go out to war with your enemy and Hashem your G-d will give him to your hands, and you will take captives." The Chofetz Chaim explains this Pasuk on a deeper level than its simple understanding. The enemy referred to here is one's own evil inclination, the Yetzer Hara. When one has to battle with his evil inclination, all he has to do is 'go out to battle' with it, and Hashem will give it over to him. With Divine help, one will succeed in his struggle—he just needs to try!

Working on our Middos

The Shl"ah Ha'kadosh says that Tzadikim of previous generations used to comment that the Pasuk (Amos 3:8) אריה שאג מי לא יירא, "When the lion roars who is not afraid", is a reference to the holy days that are in this time period. The word אריה, Aryeh (lion) is an acronym. The letter א represents Elul (אלול), ר is for Rosh Hashanah (ראש השנה), the י is for Yom Kippur (יום כיפור), and the letter ה is for Hoshanah Rabbah (הושענה רבה)—the day when our fate is handed out to the Malachim to carry out. The lion's roar of these days is a sign for us to be afraid and do Teshuvah. The word תשובה Teshuvah, writes the Shl"ah, is an acronym for the various ways we show our remorse. The letter ת is for תענית, Taanis—fasting; ש is for שק ואפר, Sak V'Eifer—sackcloth and ashes; the ב is for בכיה, Bechia—crying; and the ה is for הספד, Hespel—mourning over our Aveiros. Additionally, the letters of Elul, אלול, stand for אני לדודי ודודי לי, Ani L'Dodi V'Dodi Li—I am to my beloved and my beloved is to me. The last letters of each of these four words is a Yud, which has a Gematria, numerical value of 10, and four of them will total 40. This represents the 40 days from Rosh Chodesh Elul until Yom Kippur—which is a special time of year for Teshuvah!

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

The Pele Yo'eitz notes (241) that the Gemara in Shabbos teaches that if one is not careful in regard to washing his hands for Netilas Yadayim, it can cause one to become poor. This is so, because the letters of the word Ani (עני), poor person, stand for Al Netilas Yadayim (על נטילת ידיים). Therefore, one should be very careful with this Mitzvah!

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לע"נ: חנה בת שמואל ז"ל

פרשת כי תצא תשפ"ו

Parshas Ki Seitzei 5786 Pirkei Avos 1-2

Compiled by: Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg
Staten Island Z'manim

Erev Shabbos:

Plag HaMinchah: 6:21

Candle Lighting: 7:27

Sh'kiah: 7:45

Tzeis: 8:29

Rabbeinu Tam: 8:58

Shabbos Kodesh:

Sof Z'man Krias Shema:

Mogen Avraham: 9:00 Gra: 9:36

Sof Z'man Tefillah (Shacharis): 10:44

Chatzos: 12:59 Sh'kiah: 7:44

Havdalah: Tzeis HaKochavim: 8:28

Rabbeinu Tam (72 minutes): 8:57

Next Week: Ki Savo

Candle Lighting: 7:16

The Siddur Speaks

The Gemara in Brachos (8a) teaches that 'a favorable time' is when the Tzibur, the congregation, gathers for Davening, whenever that may be. The Maharsha therefore explains that if one happens to be Davening alone, he should try to Daven at the same time that the Shul is Davening, because it is an opportune time for Tefilos to be accepted. HaOros HaTefilah learns from this Chazal that Davening with a Minyan is a set Eis Ratson (עת רצון קבועה), and since it is so favorable for one to have his Tefilos answered, everyone should utilize every opportunity he has to Daven with a Minyan. The Gra asks how we know that this is true, that it is an Eis Ratson when the Minyan Davens together? He explains that it is not possible for there to be such a thing as an 'opportune time before Hashem', because that implies that there are times when Hashem changes His Mind or approach, and Hashem never changes. Only we can change. We can affect the way we are and how we act, but Hashem never changes. The only time we change and become better is when we perform Mitzvos—and that is what creates an Eis Ratson before Hashem! It is always favorable before Hashem, we only change ourselves to allow Hashem's favor to benefit us. The Gra continues, which Mitzvah can we do that will affect this Eis Ratson? Tefilah! As the Pasuk says (Tehilim 69:14), ואני תפילתי לך ה', 'And I Daven to You, Hashem'. Certainly, this can't refer to Davening in general. Rather, it must refer to the best way one can Daven—with a Minyan, where the precious Mitzvah to Daven is performed with others!

Middos

Once, Rav Saadyah Gaon, *zt"l*, stayed at an inn where the innkeeper was unaware of the identity of Rav Saadyah Gaon. He treated the Sage like he would any other guest and gave him a simple room to stay in. When word got out that Rav Saadyah Gaon, the leader of the generation was in town, all the townsfolk flocked to the inn to meet him. When the innkeeper saw the crowds coming to see his guest, he finally realized who his illustrious guest was, and approached Rav Saadyah Gaon with tears running down his cheeks. "Rebbei, please forgive me!" "Forgive you?" asked Rav Saadyah Gaon, "You have treated me very well. What have you done wrong?" "Rebbe!" replied the innkeeper, "I didn't know who you were! If I had known that the great Rav Saadyah Gaon was staying at my inn, I would have treated you like royalty!" When Rav Saadyah Gaon heard these sincere words, he burst into tears himself. "From what you have said," explained Rav Saadyah, "I realized the extent of our obligation towards Hashem, our King. Just as your service of me changed as you recognized my identity, so it is with my service of Hashem. With each passing day I discover new levels of Hashem's kindness towards me. I realize that whatever respect and service I offered yesterday was quite insufficient, since I have seen so much more kindness from Him today! Had I known then what I know about Hashem now, I would have served Him with even greater devotion and intensity!" Rav Saadyah Gaon taught that life is about constant rediscovery about Hashem's greatness and continuous kindness towards us. He thereby taught his students to examine their ways each and every day, even if they felt certain that they had not sinned, because with each passing day, one can recognize Hashem on a new and deeper level than the day before!

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein, *Shlit"a*, once related a story that happened with the *Ksav Sofer*. A Jew in the city of Pressburg became gravely ill and it became clear that there was not much time left for him. The most prominent physicians were consulted and various drugs were administered, but it was to no avail, and his condition did not get better. The members of the family were G-d-fearing Jews who understood that one does not give up hope, but rather he places his trust in Hashem, the Healer of all flesh. The children of this sick individual went to the Rav of the city, the holy *Ksav Sofer*, and after relating the patient's history and the present situation, they implored him for a *Brachah*, a blessing that would intercede in the Heavenly Court, so that their father would live. The *Ksav Sofer* listened, and suddenly took off the scarf that was wrapped around his neck, and handed it to the family members. He said, "Here, take this scarf and place it on the forehead of the patient, and with the help of Hashem, he will arise from his illness!" The family did as the *Ksav Sofer* advised them, and soon enough, with the help of Hashem, the patient was completely cured! It was a miracle! The students who were always present in the *Ksav Sofer's* home questioned him concerning the "holy" scarf. Did he perhaps "treat" it with the holy Names of Hashem? Was it immersed in *Kabbalah*? The *Ksav Sofer* shook his head and said, "I have been wearing this scarf for a long time. It rests on my shoulders, as I constantly learn *Torah*. It is a part of my routine of *Torah* study, and *Torah* is the greatest healer of all ills. I felt that the scarf contained within it enough *Kedushah* to provide the medicinal and therapeutic qualities that were necessary to heal the patient. It has soaked up and absorbed so much *Torah* that it can heal someone who is sick!"

Middos

A man once came to the *Chozeh* of Lublin, *zt"l*. This person was filled with *Aveiros*, and he asked the *Chozeh* to show him the way to do *Teshuvah*. The man fully expected the *Chozeh* to tell him to fast and seclude himself, but to his amazement, the *Chozeh* told him that in order for him to do *Teshuvah*, he must be extremely careful that no false word leave his mouth. The man was surprised at this advice and asked, "If I accept this upon myself and I am careful not to lie, will my *Teshuvah* be accepted?" The *Chozeh* responded that it definitely would. When he heard this, the man completely accepted upon himself that no lie would ever leave his mouth. The next day this man left his house in the dark of night, with the intent to go out and steal. On his way, he met a friend, and the friend asked him where he was going. He immediately remembered that he was not allowed to lie, and not wanting to say what he was about to do, he said he was on his way home, and he proceeded to return to his house. The next night he went out to commit another *Aveirah*, and again he met a friend who asked him where he was headed, and the same thing happened, and he returned home. This happened every time that he wanted to sin, and in this way, he became a complete *Baal Teshuvah*. Rav Pinchas of Koritz, *zt"l*, quoting Rav Zusia, *zt"l*, teaches that if one says even one false word, he immediately distances himself from Hashem. It is written in *Igeres HaGra*, that a person should not train his children with strictness, except for when it comes to lying. If a person sees that his child lies, he should act severely, because the *Torah* says that one must distance himself from a false word. Rav Gamliel Rabinowitz writes that we must discuss honesty and being careful about telling lies with our children, and we must exert much effort in training them to be very careful with any speech that comes out of their mouths. The main thing, however, is that children see the example set by the parents who themselves, are very careful with this, and this is how they will learn what to do!

The *Meforshim* teach that one who wears clothing made from *Shatnez*, which is a forbidden combination of wool and linen, it can prevent his *Tefilos* from being accepted in *Shamayim*. A young man in *Kollel*, in Gateshead, England, once related the following story: This young man at times, would travel around to raise funds for his *Kollel*. When he would come to London, he would try to visit a couple he knew who had befriended him, and he would try to bring them closer to *Yiddishkeit* and teach them about the *Mitzvos*. He would also offer his advice and support, and over the years he developed a deep friendship with them. This couple always kept *Shabbos* and *Kashrus* to the best of their ability, among other *Mitzvos* which they had learned about over the years. However, they had been married for a number of years, but they were not yet *Bentched* with children. They sought out the best medical help available, but it did not help them, and the couple had become very discouraged. Once, when the *Kollel* man visited them, the young woman poured out her heart to him, and wept bitterly that she and her husband seemed to be destined to a life without children. He tried to offer *Chizuk* and told her to be strong, and that Hashem will not abandon them. When he returned to Gateshead, he made a point to discuss the matter with a good friend of his, and after some thought, he recommended that the couple be encouraged to undertake an additional *Mitzvah* that they might not be keeping, and in that merit, they might be *Bentched* with a child. The *Kollel* man considered it, and decided to suggest the *Mitzvah* of *Shatnez*, and he presented the idea to them. The husband's immediate reaction was that he knew all about *Shatnez*, and that he even had his suits and coats tested for *Shatnez*, and they were perfectly *Kosher*. The young man then asked if his friend's wife's outfits and coats were tested, and the husband reacted with surprise. He said that he had been under the impression that this *Mitzvah* was only for men and did not apply to women. When he realized his error, they took the wife's clothes to be tested, and after inspecting her coat, it was indeed found to be full of *Shatnez*. The forbidden material was promptly removed from her coat, and it was then rendered *Kosher*. This incident took place in the middle of Elul, in 5753. A little more than nine months later, in Tammuz of 5754, this woman gave birth to a healthy baby boy. The delight of the couple was indescribable, and they were eternally grateful to Hashem for having answered their *Tefilos*!

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