

Gilyon Heichal Hakodesh

חודש אלול
פ' ראה פ' שופטים
פ' כי תצא
תשפ"ו

Weekly Inspiration based on the Teachings of the Holy Breslevar Rebbe

THE ART OF BEING IN THE CORRECT GEAR

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(1) IN THE SEA OF CONFUSION

When Dovid Hamelech was crying about his spiritual confusions, he says, “*Tovati ... I have sunk. I have come into deep waters, and a whirlpool has carried me away. Save me [so] I shall not sink. Let me be saved ... from the deep waters. Let neither a whirlpool of water carry me away, nor let the shadowy deep waters swallow me.*” (*Tehillim* 69). “If Hashem would not have been here for us ... then the waters would have washed us away. The raging waters would have drowned our souls.” (*ibid* 124). “Stretch forth Your hands from on high. Rescue and save me from the many waters.” (*ibid* 144).

We know of roads and pathways on dry land. However, the oceans seem to have no way to navigate them.

(2) A PATH IN THE OCEAN? CAN I REALLY FIND CLARITY IN SPIRITUALITY?

Yet, Hashem created paths even in the oceans. The *Posuk* (*Yeshayoh* 43:16) says, “*Hanosein bayom derech*”, Hashem makes a path in the middle of the ocean. The Arizal says

that this *Posuk* is the *Sod* – *Kabbalistic* secret – of *Elul*. Hashem makes a path in the middle of the ocean.

This world is called dry land, and the spiritual worlds are called the sea. Our job in this world is to make this physical world spiritual by drawing down spiritual awareness from the sea of the heavenly worlds. We must train ourselves to navigate this sea. There might seem no way to find a path and a way to join the sea of spirituality with this world. For how will we manage to swim and navigate the oceans of spirituality with our two feet on the ground?



(3) BEHIND THE SCENES

The lesson that this article is based on is what the Rebbe taught at the third meal of *Shabbos Shuvoh* 5563. First, he only taught the simple *Chassidic* part, which is (comparatively) easy to understand. Having completed this lesson, the Rebbe *davened Maariv* and made

Havdoloh. Then, he started going over this lesson with several of his *Chassidim*. Some of them were great Kabbalists in their own right who, as per the Rebbe's instructions, used to pray with Kabbalistic intentions from the *Siddur* of the Arizal. The Rebbe then asked them, “Tell me how this lesson contains allusions to the mystical intentions of *Elul*?” They sat there without answering, because it is impossible for people to understand by themselves how the mystical intentions of *Elul* are alluded to in the lesson. The Rebbe then asked for a copy of the *Siddur* of the Arizal. He opened it and showed them the section dealing with the mystical intentions of *Elul*.

The Rebbe now began to reveal the most incredible wonders, explaining how all the mystical intentions of *Elul* are alluded to in his teaching, in a truly amazing way. (In this article, we have combined the two parts to make the flow easier.)

(4) THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING HALOCHAH

In order to succeed in returning to the sea of spirituality, to return to Hashem, one must be “*Boki Be'halochah*”, which simply means to be an expert in *Halochah* – The Code of Jewish Law. For, without this, one does not know if what he is doing is

right or wrong. He doesn't know what to change, or how he should go about changing his behavior. Indeed, the Rebbe gave us a daily obligation to learn *Shulchan Oruch* – The Code of Jewish Law.

(5) ARE THERE ANY HALOCHOS AND LAWS OF SPIRITUAL MOODS?

However, there is another whole field of expertise needed just as importantly. This is the expertise of how to deal with the continuous high and low situations, both spiritual and emotional.

The Evil One uses these highs and lows to throw extreme mood swings at us in order to hamper our service of Hashem. We need to, continuously, learn more and more techniques until we become experts in dealing with his tricks.

This is "*Boki Be'halocho*" taken to its ultimate level. This is being a *Boki* – expert – in the art of not letting the Evil One get the better of us, and continuously going forward – *Halichoh* (same letters as *Halochoh*).

(6) EVERYONE, EVEN A TZADDIK, IS CONSTANTLY REPENTING

We all want to behave in the right way. We would all like to rectify our mistakes and incorrect habits. However, we find it hard to be occupied with repentance, since it has negative connotations for us. "If I am busy repenting, then this means that I was a 'sinner' until now."

The Rebbe teaches that this is not so. Repentance is not to be misconstrued as a "sinner's bandage."

Repentance – *teshuvoh* – means "returning". That is our whole job in

this world. Our *neshomos* – souls – are rooted in G-dliness, and are, at first, "One" with Hashem. Then, the *neshomos* are sent down to this world, far away from their Source. The *Neshomah* is continuously yearning to return to the pleasure of "Oneness" with its Source – Hashem.

Every single thing that we do, say or think in the service of Hashem is "going in the way of *Teshuvoh*". *Teshuvoh* is not a "debt to pay." Instead, it is a way of life. Actually, it is *the* way of life. The **Way** - the *Derech Ha'teshuvoh*. Therefore, the Rebbe teaches (Likutei Moharan #6), "A person should **continuously** embrace the attribute of repentance... To go in the way of *Teshuvoh* is ... to **constantly** go in Hashem's ways".

(7) SILENTLY HEARING MY SHAME

There is another mistake that hampers our service of Hashem. Naturally, we all want successes. Sometimes, however, the idea of succeeding paradoxically stops us from succeeding.

We are too ashamed to accept, silently, the truth of the low spiritual level that we have fallen to. We protest, complain and sometimes even say in denial, "How could this happen to **Me**?". Our failures break our confidence, and we lose our momentum.

Indeed, the Rebbe teaches, "*She'yishma bizonoyidom ve'yishtok*" – "Accepting your shame silently" is an important ingredient of the repentance process. The first Hebrew letters of "*She'yishma Bizonoyidom Ve'yishtok*" spell out the word

"*yoshuv*" – He shall repent/return. Wholesome service of Hashem includes accepting and dealing correctly with the shameful "lows" and failures.

(8) 50% OF OUR JOB DESCRIPTION IS: TO KNOW THAT HASHEM IS WITH US EVEN WHEN WE FAIL OUR JOB

If we do not realize and feel the strength of Hashem's love and care for us in our "falls," then we will not have the spiritual and emotional strength to climb back up.

When Hashem told Moshe to warn Pharaoh and try to persuade him to let the *Yidden* leave Mitzrayim, Hashem said "**Come to Pharaoh...**" instead of "**Go...**" As every word in the Torah is eternal, this message is for each and every one of us. When we have fallen into our own spiritual Mitzrayims and we are fighting with our own Pharaohs in our heart, we need spiritual power to fight. When we have fallen, and are thus weakened, from where do we draw strength? The power is this: "**Come to Pharaoh**" – **Come with Me to fight your Pharaohs**, for I am with you even within your feelings of spiritual rejection..."

Similarly, Dovid Hamelech (*Tehillim* #139) revived himself from his falls with, "...and if I make my bed in Hell, **Here You are...**" The awareness of "**Here You are...** with me... in my hell..." is the only Way Out of hell.

(9) JUST LIKE THE ANGELS FALL

We might want to be like angels, never falling. In fact, teaches the Rebbe, even the angels have this

“changing of gears.” The *Novi Yechezkel* relates what he saw in “the vision”: “*Hachayois Rotzoi vo'Shov*” – The angels called *Chayois* would go forward and backward (or) running and returning.” So, even the angels’ service of Hashem is not constituted only of “going forward.”

(10) THE TWO TYPES OF EXPERTISE

Therefore, we need these two types of expertise in order to survive. We need to be: 1. *Boki BeRotzoi* – Experts in going forward. And, 2. *Boki beShov* – Experts in “falling back.”

(11) IT IS A TWO-WAY ROAD

The word *DeReCH* - Way (of *Teshuvoh*) — has the numerical value (224) as twice of the word *BoKI* (112). For, being able to navigate this path and way of returning continuously to Hashem requires one to be an expert – *Boki* – in both of these fields of expertise.

(12) EXPERTISE OF HIS MULTI-FACETED RELATIONSHIP

The root and essence of this deep understanding and expertise comes from one’s perception of and relationship with Hashem. Being familiar with all the faces that He shows us and with all the ways with which He relates to us: (A) When He is showing His face and the light of His name “*Yhvh*” of loving-kindness. And, (B) when He has turned His face, showing His back but showing the light of His name “*Elokim*” – strength and *din*.

The numerical values of “*Yhvh*” (26) and “*Elokim*” (86), added together, equal the numerical value

of “*BoKI*” – expert. For the level of one’s spiritual expertise to navigate the way of returning to Hashem depends on one’s level of perception of both of His attributes and faces.

(13) IMPORTANT PART OF DRIVING TEST: USING THE REVERSE GEAR

If you have fallen, you must, on one hand, remember Hashem’s name, “*Yhvh*”. Remember His care, sympathy, kindness, closeness, and love that He has for you. Remember how much He cherishes your immeasurable value. And remember the many good points you definitely still possess.

Be grateful that you have not fallen lower. Search for, value, and enjoy whatever good points you still have. Do not undertake to do too much in this weak (fallen) state. Instead, take things step by step, at your own current level.

So, with this name of *Yhvh* in mind, never forget that even “... if I make my bed in Hell, You are **here (next to me)** ...”

Moreover, always remember that “...*Ve'Dodi Li.*” My Lover, Hashem, is for me.

(14) DON'T REVERSE TOO FAST

On the other hand, you must remember His name “*Elokim*,” His strength, and the unwavering will of His Torah. Always be aware of His strong and unwavering will for you to behave correctly, according to your capabilities, *in the next instant*. This is true even if until now you have callously transgressed the whole Torah, G-d forbid.

Therefore, we must be strong and not let the previous fall cause us to

fall any lower. Unlike those who mistakenly say, “If I’ve fallen anyway, what’s the use trying anymore.”

This is the expertise of dealing with the lows and falling backwards. This is called “being *Boki Be'Shov*” – being an expert in how to go backwards, and emulate the angels’ “*Ha'Chayos... Ve'Shov*”.

(15) DON'T DRIVE SLOW ON THE FAST LANE

Then, the Rebbe teaches how to be an expert in “going forward – *Boki Be'Rotzoi*”. When Hashem helps things go well, and you are succeeding in your devotions and service of Hashem, then you must remember His name “*Yhvh*” and His infinite greatness. Do not be complacent with your level. Strive to cleanse yourself more, to emulate His attributes of Kindness more and more, and to perceive ever-greater levels of knowledge of Hashem and His Torah.

So, with this name “*Yhvh*” in mind, never forget the yearning for never-ending depths of “*Ani Le'Dodi...*” I am for my Lover, Hashem.

And always remember “*If I ascend to heaven, you are **There** (i.e. more exciting levels are always expanding from my level over here to Hashem’s level over there)*”

(16) KEEP TO THE SPEED LIMITS

On the other hand, you must remember His name “*Elokim*” and His strength of boundaries. If you cannot understand or reach the spiritual feeling that you are striving for, then nullify yourself before His will and be satisfied completely with unbounded acceptance and

happiness, receiving whatever He is giving.

This is called “being *Boki Be’Rotzoi*” - being an expert in how to go forward and emulate the angels’ “*Ha’Chayos Rotzoi...*”

(17) DON’T HURT ANYONE WHILE DRIVING

One of the main areas of life, which Hashem uses as boundaries to constrict the speed of our moving forward spiritually, is the realm of our family life.

Concerning other people in your life who may not be on your level, you should take extra care to remember His name “*Elokim*” with its strong boundaries. Thus, you must powerfully balance all the parts of your service of Hashem. Do not allow your spiritual pursuits to lessen the fulfillment of your obligations to others.

(18) THE HAPPY MARRIAGE PILL: ELUL

This is especially relevant to the relationship with your spouse. The connection between husband and wife mirrors the connection between Hashem and the *Yidden*. Therefore, Elul and its special power of rectifying our relationship with Hashem is especially *mesugal* – propitious – as a remedy for problems in marriage, *Sholom Bayis* and for finding the right marriage partner.

This can be seen when Avrohom Ovinu sent his servant Eliezer to search for a wife for his son, Yitzchok. He advised him what to do if there are difficulties, “... *And if the woman does not want to go back with you... - ...Ve'im Lo soveh ho'ishoh Loleches Acharecho...*”

The first Hebrew letters of the first two words and the last two words in that phrase “*Ve'im Lo... Loleches Acharecho*” make up the word Elul. Then, in the center, we have the words “*Soveh ho'ishoh – the woman Will want*”. Fulfilling the devotions of Elul transforms the negative situation of marital strife or not finding a spouse, where “...*the woman does not want to go with you...*” to a good one.

When we transform and elevate the unwillingness of “*Ve'im Lo, Loleches Acharecho*” into its initial letters of ELUL, then what remains is “*Soveh Ho'Ishoh – The woman Will want*”, then she **will** want to “*Go with you...*” i.e. be together with him.

(19) HEALING ALL RELATIONSHIPS

This power of rectifying relationships continues into all similar relationships of a giver and a receiver. Examples of such relationships would be, parents and their children and teachers, Rabbis and Rebbees with their *Talmidim* – students...

(20) HASHEM’S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE TO US. AND OURS TO OUR CLOSE ONES.

When we internalize the ideas of “*Boki Be'Shov*” and become experts in perceiving Hashem’s love and strength for us in our weak situations, we get the ability and resolve to return to Him and rectify our behavior. With this, we become even better experts in “going forward - *Boki Be'Rotzoi*”.

This whole process now becomes mirrored and reflected down in this world. Just as we perceive Hashem’s

unconditional love for us even when we misbehave to Him and are distant from Him, so too can we find in ourselves the power to give unconditional love to our spouses, children and students. This, in turn, will give them the emotional power to rectify their relationship with us, just as His love for us gives us the ability and resolve to return to Him and rectify our own behavior.

It is just as the Rebbe taught us: through the devotions of Elul “it will become ‘*Soveh Ho'Ishoh*’ – the woman will want – ‘*Loleches Acharecho*’ – to follow after you.”

P. KI SEITSEI

(21) FIGHTING THE ENEMY WITH HIS OWN WEAPON - THE AMMUNITION OF DESPAIR

In P. Ki Seitzei we again see allusions to this expertise in not climbing too high and not falling too low. The Baal Shem Tov taught that the main weapon of the *Yetzer Hora* is to bring us into despair, which he calls false humility. We despair from ever being able to serve Hashem. We despair from ever being able to correct our behavior. We despair of ever overcoming our great weaknesses and defeating the strong power of the *Yetzer Hora*.

Mohorosh explains that within this feeling of despair exists a built-in medicine to counteract and neutralize it. Chazal say that without Hashem’s help we would never be able to overcome the *Yetzer Hora*. Indeed, Dovid Hamelech states (*Tehillim 131*) that he feels powerless without Hashem; he is like a suckling baby in its mother’s arms. We can use this idea to turn the feeling of weakness into a spiritual weapon.

My weakness makes me feel the need for Hashem's help. My neediness makes me feel like a helpless baby in Hashem's arms. Therefore, my weakness brings me nearer to Hashem. Indeed, my spiritual downfalls could have been heavenly orchestrated to bring me to this humility and closeness to Hashem. As the Rebbe taught, "The ultimate intention of the downfall is the consequent ascent".

This week's *Sedra* alludes to this concept. It starts by discussing the war with the enemy. "*When you go forth to war with your enemy then Hashem your G-d will give him (your enemy) over into your hands and you will capture his captives.*"

Mohorosh explains the inner meaning here. The enemy refers to the Yeitzer Hora, so "*When you go forth to war with your enemy* (the Yeitzer Hora with his ammunition of despair) *then Hashem your G-d will give him* (the Yeitzer Hora) *over, into your hands. You will* (be able to) *capture* (and overcome his ammunition; the feelings of despair and weakness, *in the same way* that he captures) *his captives* (i.e. with the power of weakness. Your weakness and neediness are your spiritual powers. Your neediness makes you feel the power of Hashem's care, just as a helpless baby feels the safety of its mother's protective arms.)

Moreover, this is especially understood concerning Hashem's two names mentioned in this *Posuk*. The two names of Hashem "Yhvh Elokecho... – Hashem your G-d (will give over your enemy into your hands)" allude to this. For this transformation of negativity / weakness into positivity / reliance on Hashem is, in essence, the

transformation of the *din* – judgement – and hiddenness of the name "Elokecho" into the *rachamim* – lovingkindness – and revelation of the name *Yhvh*.

(22) FIGHTING THE ENEMY WITH HIS OWN WEAPON - THE AMMUNITION OF ARROGANCE

If you overcome this usual tactic of despair and hence, all is going well for you in your spirituality - *Avodas Hashem*, then the *Yeitzer Hora* uses the opposite tactic. He tries to throw you into pride and haughtiness.

The Rebbe teaches us a technique to deal with this, as well. Say to yourself: "A true connection with Hashem is one of humility. A true perception of Hashem is one of His greatness and almightiness. Therefore, we have a constant need for Him and His assistance. As Chazal say about an arrogant person - *Baal Gaavah*, "Hashem says 'He and I cannot dwell together in the same world'". Therefore, if I am arrogant about my so-called closeness with Hashem, it cannot be a true relationship. It is a contradiction in terms.

This concept is also alluded to in this *Posuk*. "*If you go forth to war with your enemy then Hashem your G-d will give him (your enemy) over into your hands and you will capture his captives.*"

The Rebbe explains the hidden, inner message. *If you go forth to war with your enemy* (the Yeitzer Hora) *then he* (the Yeitzer Hora will fight back and) *will give over* (into your heart the arrogance about the imagined fact that) *Hashem your G-d* (is) *in your hands* (i.e. that Hashem belongs to you and obeys your every wish, for

you are a perfect Tzaddik). *Then*, (the solution to this tactic is that) *you should capture* (him with) *his* (way of capturing you, the) *captive*.

So, if he is capturing you with inflated pride, then capture and overcome him the same way. Say to yourself, "If I feel haughtiness in the fact that I am close to Hashem, then this cannot be a true and real perception of Hashem's closeness. For, Hashem says about a conceited person 'I and he cannot be together in the same world'"

(23) REDEEMING OUR NESHOMOH FROM CAPTIVITY - RETURNING HOME TO HASHEM

Elul, with its devotions, is also alluded to in the next few *Pesukim*. The Torah speaks about marrying a woman whom he had seen in the war. The commentators explain that sometimes the holy Jewish soul has fallen into a bad place, within a non-Jewish nation. Similarly, our own *Neshomoh* has fallen into a bad place. Through these devotions of Elul, there is a revival of the relationship between our *Neshomoh* and Hashem. It is returning to the marriage with Hashem.

Throughout this month, we work on this. "*She should cry for her father and her mother for one month*". This alludes to: *She* (our *Neshomoh*) *should cry* (in yearning) *for* (closeness with) *her father and mother* (Hashem and His revelation - the Shechinoh) *for one month* (of Elul)."

Then, we return home – we, our *Neshomos*, return to Hashem. The Hebrew letters of Elul make up the first letters of "*Lecho Le'ishoh, Veheiveisoh El...*" – "For You, to be a wife! Bring her in..."

P. SHOFTIM

(24) THE REMEDY FOR MANSLAUGHTER: LEARN TO DRIVE SAFELY AND PROFESSIONALLY

P. Shoftim, speaks about the *Orei Miklot* – cities of refuge. Three such cities had to be prepared in the Holy Land and another three “*Be’ever Hayarden*” outside the Holy Land. Altogether, there were six such cities. If one accidentally killed someone, he must seek refuge and dwell in one of these cities for a certain period of time. This is his rectification for the accidental murder. The Torah states, “*Tochin lechoh ha’Derech...* - Prepare for yourself a **way**” so anyone who needs to find the way to these cities.

Every sin or wrongdoing kills parts of one’s soul. This killing, however, is unintentional; we were unaware of the killing of the soul. “*Tochin lechoh ha’Derech...* - Prepare for yourself a **way**”. This alludes to the **way** of *Teshuvoh* – repentance. As previously mentioned, this **way** – **Derech** – is comprised of the two types of “*Boki*”:

1) Expertise and G-dly perceptions of *Rotzoi* - when ascending **into holiness**. These are alluded to by the cities of refuge inside the **Holy Land**.

2) Expertise and G-dly perceptions of *Shov* – when falling **out of holiness**. These are alluded to by the cities of refuge **outside** the **Holy Land**.

(25) ESCAPE INTO THE ELUL REFUGE

This is doubly connected to the name of this month, Elul.

As mentioned, the Hebrew letters of Elul stand for “*Ani Ledodi (Rotzoi) Vedodi Li (Shov)*”.

In addition, when the Torah speaks about these *Orei Miklot*, it says: “... *Inoh Le’Yodoi Vesamti Lechoh (mokom asher yonus...)*” – “...Happen by accident, then I will provide for you (a place of refuge...)”. Again, the Hebrew letters of “Elul” stand for “*Inoh Le’Yodoi Vesamti Lechoh*”. Elul shines these mindsets of refuge into us to enable us to escape within the mindsets of *Rotzoi* and *Shov*.

(26) SAFELY HIDING BY HASHEM

Throughout the month of Elul, we say in the chapter “*Le’Dovid Hashem Ori,*” “*For He conceals me... He hides me in the cover of His tent... He lifts me on high.*” We must seek refuge in these Heavenly cities and fields of G-dly perception of Hashem’s love and strength; of His names “*Yhvh*” and “*Elokim*.”

The ultimate level of this awareness lies in the six words of the Posuk: “*Shema Yisroel Yhvh Elokeinu Yhvh Echod*”. The powers of Emunoh and of G-dly perception in these six words correspond to the power of the six cities of refuge; to rectify, and to revive the parts of our souls that we have unintentionally killed.

P. REAH

(27) COMBINING THE DIFFERENT FACETS

Therefore, we must see our relationship with Hashem as a combination relating to both of His names.

The Posuk says, “*See that I am placing before you a blessing and a curse. The blessing is if you hear the Mitzvos of Hashem your Elokim... The curse is if you do not hear the*

Mitzvos of Hashem your Elokim.” The word “*Mitzva*” is connected to the word “*tzavso*” – joining. Therefore, the inner meaning of these *Pesukim* is:

“*The life of blessing is if you hear and understand the concept of – Mitzvos - joining and combining together both types of relationship with G-d of Hashem and your Elokim... The life of curse is if you do not want to hear and understand the concept of – Mitzvos - joining and combining together both types of relationship with G-d of Hashem and your Elokim.*”

(28) ARE WE KOSHER? OUR FINS AND SCALES

“*Hanosein Bayom Derech*” – Hashem creates a path and a way in the ocean. The *Yidden* are likened to the fish in the ocean (“*Ve’Yidgu Loroiv*”). If we follow the path of Elul, connecting to Hashem in all situations, then we are like the *kosher* fish that have fins to help them swim forward and scales to save them from harm and “falls.”

(29) THE ULTIMATE MERGING OF HIS NAMES

May Hashem help us to navigate the most difficult ocean weather through being aware of all the different types of relationships that we can have with Him ... that we **must** have with Him. Until the complete revelation when: “*Vehoyo Hashem lemelech al kol ho’oretz, bayom ha’hu yihyeh hashem echod ushmoi echod*” – “Hashem will be King upon the whole world, on that day *Yhvh* - Hashem will be One and His name (*Elokim*) will be One.” *Bimheiro Beyomeinu Omein!*

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