



Yesodos m' ha Sedra

LESSONS IN HASHKAFKA & HALACHA FROM THE PARSHA

In memory of R' Shmuel Shmelka ben HaRav Moshe Kizelnik z"l



*From the desk of
the Rosh Kollel...*

Welcome to all our new subscribers!

ברוך שהחיינו וקמנו והגיענו לזמן הזה !

The kollel has completed its 17th year and has impacted many people from all walks of life; from the avreichim, to the local baalei batim, and neighborhood youth. Thank you to all those who have supported us on this journey. To find out how to make a good thing (טוב = 17) even better, email us at info@torahkollel.com

We have replaced the 'Sugyas ha'sedra' section with a new series called 'Zechus ha'Shabbos'. If you missed that edition (parshas Va'eschanan), email us to find out why!

Everyone needs a place! Stake YOUR claim today! Email us at info@torahkollel.com to find out how!

Yesodos m' ha'Sedra is nearing the completion of its second decade of publication and we want to hear feedback from our readership: What improvements or changes would you like to see next year? Please let us know what you think by emailing us!

Contact us at info@torahkollel.com for further information or to subscribe to the weekly Yesodos!

- Rabbi David Lewin

To sponsor an edition of the Yesodos for only \$54 contact us: info@torahkollel.com.

ראה

תשפ"ו

HE IS OUR FATHER. LET'S BUILD THE RELATIONSHIP!

There is a commonality between the parsha and its haftarah in that both speak about us as children of Hashem. In the middle of a long and packed krias ha'Torah, the Torah informs us "banim atem l'Hashem Elokeichen" - that we are children of the Ribono shel Olam. In the haftarah we read "v'kol bana'ich limudei Hashem" - that all of Hashem's children study His Torah, another clear reference to the Jewish people as Hakadosh Boruch Hu's children.

However, this matter is actually disputed. According to R' Yehuda (Kiddushin 36a), we are only Hashem's children when we behave as we should, but, R' Meir disagrees. Citing several pesukim in support, he maintains that no matter how far a Jew strays from Hakadosh Boruch Hu, he or she is still considered His child. Although usually we follow the opinion of R' Yehuda over that of R' Meir, in this case, the rishonim and acharonim seem to assume that R' Meir's approach is true, and that it is important that we as Jews understand things that way.

Accordingly, we are to view our relationship with our Creator as a sort of biological fact; regardless of our relationship or lack thereof, we are still tied to Him, and even if we rebel, our Father still wants us back.

Yet, we need to examine the context of where the Torah communicates this message to us. In ancient times, it was common for people to mourn the loss of a loved one by tearing out their hair and cutting their skin. The Torah forbids such excessive behavior, but introduces us to the topic by proclaiming "banim atem l'Hashem". So, we are Hashem's children, and therefore, we are forbidden from making lacerations on our own bodies? We have six hundred and thirteen mitzvos, and the Torah never tell us that we shouldn't eat rodents, or should put on tefillin, "because we are Hashem's children". What is the connection?

We have a dual relationship with Hakadosh Boruch Hu. We are both His servants and His children. We say it several times on Rosh Hashana: "im k'banim, im k'avadim". According to some, it is either one or the other, but the truth is, that we are both. When we say "avinu malkeinu", we are saying both, because He is both our father, and the king.

There is a dispute in the gemara as to whether or not a person is allowed to inflict injury on himself. This has ramifications in halacha ranging from risk taking to cosmetic surgery, but when it comes to mourning over the dead, the Torah is telling us that this debate is a moot point: Either way, explains the Chasam Sofer, a person cannot hurt himself as a way of dealing with his loss. If a person is an eved, then he simply can't because every slave is owned by his master on one level or another and the eved's body isn't his own to do as he sees fit.

Still, if we are Hashem's children, then so is the relative who passed away. He or she is also a child, who has returned home to our Father. Why then, would we be upset about our brother or sister being reunited with our Father? Sure, the Torah mandates certain halachos of aveilus, but these are for the benefit of the neshama, and for the relatives who have to continue living in this world. Anything beyond this, is not only excessive, but blurs our vision of this reunion. As an aside, perhaps this is another reason why when it comes to aveilus, the halacha follows the more lenient view.

So the Torah is telling us "you are Hashem's children. Don't be upset, because ultimately, it is all for the good!". The takeaway is that in every difficult situation, we are to realize that Hashem orchestrates all and remember that we are His children and as a Father, He is doing it "for us", not, "to us".

This is our lifetime avodah of emunah; to internalize that all of our difficulties and challenges are designed to strengthen our relationship with Hakadosh Boruch Hu.

We can't know why Hashem does things or understand His workings, but one thing is clear: As our Father, He wants a relationship with us, and whether or not the primary purpose of our difficulties and challenges is to bring us closer to Him, we know that He wants His children close; by calling us "banim" regardless of what we do, we believe that He maintains a strong desire to help us get there. We stand at the threshold of the month of Elul which is an acronym for "ani l'dodi, v'dodi li". In short, this month is all about making this relationship real, but the avodah is about making it real for us, because for Him, He has already told us we are His beloved children.

As we mentioned, the haftarah also refers to us as banim. The posuk there however, speaks of limud ha'Torah. Chazal tell us that we should read the word "banayich" (Your children) as "bonayich" (Your builders). Perhaps what this means is that through limud ha'Torah, we can build our relationship with Hakadosh Boruch Hu, because when we study Torah, we are more in tune with ratzon Hashem, and if we know what He wants, and understand that mostly, He wants us to relate to Him as a father, we can stand before Avinu Malkeinu on Rosh Hashana and with a more developed emunah in Him, beg, "k'racheim av al banim" - like a father has mercy on his sons!

עֲנִיָּה סַעֲרָה לֹא נִחַמָּה הָיָה אֲנֹכִי מְרַבֵּץ בְּפוּךְ אֲבֹנִיךָ וַיִּסְדְּתִיךָ בַּסְּפִירִים: (ישעיה נד:יא)

The Navi compares golus to a strong storm from which we seek, but do not find solace.

He proceeds to tell k'lal Yisroel, 'v'kol banayich limudei Hashem, v'rav shalom banayich' (that all of our children are students of Hashem, and our children have great peace). Of course we are all familiar with the famous words of Chazal (Berachos 64a) which we always say at the end of 'Ein k'Elokeinu in davening - that Talmidei Chachamim make peace in the world. Although the general understanding of this is based on Chazal's directive to adjust the word 'banayich' to instead read 'bonaich' (your builders - and of course, it is Torah scholars who build the word - The Ben Ish Chai explains that we can't lose sight of the real reading of the posuk either. Sons, however is also a clear reference to one's students, as a successful rebbe gains the most from his students.

In fact, the krias shema we say every day commands us "v'shinantem l'vanecha". While most of us say these words thinking that the Torah is bidding us to learn with our children, Rashi tells us that 'sons' here, primarily means students. If this is true, why then did the Torah choose the word for children, if it meant students? HaRav Yitzchok Hutner zt"l explained that the Torah is telling us that an effective rebbe, has to love his students like his own children.

The Yalkut Shimoni (Yeshaya 54) explains that the reason why we forget the Torah we learn is because our rebbeim are mortal men, but in Olam Haba, Hashem will teach us Torah Himself, and we won't forget any of it. Although then, we will no longer have the opportunity to do mitzvos, we will continue to learn Torah which will draw us closer to Hakadosh Boruch Hu, constantly strengthening the relationship between us and Him.

The Torah forbade doing melacha on Shabbos, but it is permissible 'for melacha to be done'. This is clear; in contradistinction to the opinion of the Tzadokim, we have no issue with lights and air conditioning running throughout Shabbos. Even Beis Shamai, who espoused a more restrictive definition of what melachos may continue to be done on Shabbos, their issue was that of allowing one's keilim (utensils) to rest on Shabbos as well. The fact that melacha is being done, is a non-issue. As in most cases disputed by Beis Shamai and Beis Hillel, we pasken like Beis Hillel and provided the melacha doesn't lend itself to hashmaas kol or zilzul Shabbos (which may be the case in running a washing machine or dishwasher on Shabbos), it is permitted. Accordingly, one may turn on his air conditioner to run throughout Shabbos, etc.

Technically, speaking, one may also set up a Shabbos clock (or timer) to turn on and off the air conditioner, heating, or lights throughout Shabbos. Although R' Moshe Feinstein was of the opinion that this too is often forbidden, with the exception of a few of his talmidim, his ruling was not accepted by most communities. This does not include manipulating a timer on Shabbos or yo tov which while may be permitted at times, can also be a serious violation and desecration of Shabbos. That topic, will be dealt with at a later period in time, b'ezer Hashem.

There is however, one major exception to this rule and it affects every family, every single week, and that is that Chazal did not permit one to simply put his food up to cook on erev Shabbos so that it should continue on its own over the next several hours. This isn't because there is anything wrong with food cooking on its own per se, but because of the likelihood that one might be tempted to make 'necessary' adjustments to the flame, food, or both. In past we have dealt with the halachos of shehiya, chazara and hatmana in these pages, but the in order to make a proper kinyan on these halachos - i.e. the way to gain clarity on these halachos - is through 'shehiya, hatmana and chazara'. (Meaning slow focused review, pun intended). As such, we will take this opportunity to review the sugyas and emerging halachos.

Chazal forbade leaving food on the fire at the onset of Shabbos out of concern that one may come to adjust the flame or stoke the coals in order to expedite its cooking. It seems from most Rishonim that the concern here is not necessarily that one will cook the food and be liable for bishul, but rather for adjusting the fire which is an act of havarah (lighting fire). (See further)

The Gemara (third perek of Shabbos) discusses exactly what is included in the prohibition: There was a well known thief named Ben Drusai who was always on the run and always consumed his food before it was cooked. The Rishonim dispute whether the food he ate was one-third or half cooked. (How to measure this is itself a later dispute and beyond the scope of these pages.) According to one opinion (Chananya), anything that has not yet reached the level of ma'achel ben drusai Ben Drusai is included in this prohibition. However, if the food is already half (or a third) cooked, one may then leave it over the fire at the onset of Shabbos.

Although there is a machlokes among the Rishonim as to whether food cooked to this point is already considered cooked (and cooking it beyond this point would not be a violation of a melacha d'Oraisa), it is not necessary to say that Chananya holds this way regarding cooking. Since here the concern is adjusting the fire, one could suggest that although the food is not yet considered cooked, once it is "close to cooked" one will not be tempted to adjust the fire. Rather, the concern is about completely uncooked food - that in desperation one will be tempted to adjust the fire.

The Chachamim however, understand that one may not leave food on the fire, even if it is completely cooked, so long as its accelerated cooking will not damage the food. This is referred to as "mitztameik v'yafa lo" (literally, its shrinkage is good for it, such as in the case of cholent that generally is more tasty when it cooks for longer). The Chachamim understand that so long as a person will benefit from adjusting the fire, he may be lured into forgetting that it is Shabbos in order to do so. Only when the food is mitztameik v'ra lo (literally, its shrinkage is detrimental for it) is there no concern that one will try to adjust the flame. This does not necessarily mean that the food is on the verge of burning; if the pot of food is intended for guests and the quantity of food is not much more than fit for its eaters, shrinkage alone can be detrimental even where it improves its taste.

The Rishonim are split as to which opinion to follow. The Rif and Rambam rule like the Chachamim and forbid leaving anything on the fire unless its continued cooking is detrimental to its taste. However, Rashi and the Ri (in Tosfos) rule leniently and allow food that is at least half cooked to be left on the fire. The Shulchan Aruch rules stringently, citing the lenient opinion as "and some say that...". As a rule, when this pattern appears in Shulchan Aruch, the mechaber intends that one follow the first opinion, relying on the second only under extenuating circumstances or b'dieved.

The Rosh, however, writes that "since K'lal Yisroel is very attached to enjoying Shabbos, and will certainly not listen to those who forbid leaving food over the fire, therefore, one should rule leniently, [like the opinion of Rashi and Tosfos]". Based on this Rosh, the Rema writes that our custom is to be lenient (though the Mishna Berura understands as somewhat of a leniency and therefore recommends circumventing the issue via another method). (See Biur Halacha, and see below for other such methods.) See, however, the Chazon Ish who understands the Rosh as a p'sak to be followed l'chatchila, and thus holds that there is no need to act stringently.

There is another opinion among the Rishonim: The Ba'al HaMa'or writes that even after food has been half cooked, Chazal were

still concerned that one may adjust the fire. However, this concern only exists until the food is completely cooked. Once the food is fully cooked, there are two different customs regarding leaving it on the fire and one may follow the local custom.

The mishna states that *sh'hiya* is permitted if the fire is *garuf v'katum*, although a minority opinion (see R' Akiva Eiger) contends that this is only true if it has reached the level of *maachel ben drusai*. This means that either the coals are removed from the stove or oven (*garuf* means shoveled out - exactly how clean the oven floor must be of coals or how much of the fire needs to be covered is a subject of discussion unto itself and is beyond the scope of these pages), or they are covered with ashes (*katum*). In this way, a person has demonstrated in a proactive way that he is no longer interested in the heat source - if he has just taken steps to diminish it, why would he later reignite it? In modern day terms this means covering the fire with a *blech* and covering the knobs. Once the fire is deemed "*garuf v'katum*", one may leave food that is not totally cooked [on it to finish cooking. According to some *poskim* (see for example *Igros Moshe*) covering the knobs is a nice *hidur*, but not required. According to some however, it is completely necessary. (This is the opinion of the *Shevet HaLevi* and *Rav Aharon Kotler zt"l* who viewed covering the fire as a *hidur*). Most *poskim* however rule that one should cover the knobs as well, whenever possible. According to the *Chazon Ish* however, a metal covering is insufficient. Since metal is a good conductor of heat, it cannot serve as a sufficient diminishment of it. [Regarding a thin layer of foil, many are of the opinion that this is an insufficient covering for even the mainstream opinion. One should consult his own *Rav* before relying on foil as a method of covering the fire.] Regarding a heat source that cannot be adjusted, most contemporary *poskim* agree that leaving a pot of food is not subject to these restrictions and is considered as if already "*garuf v'katum*". (This seems to be the opinion of the *Igros Moshe* and represents the view of R' Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l.) A minority opinion requires a *blech* for such a heating source as well. (This was reportedly the opinion of *HaRav Elyashiv zt"l*).

The *Gemara* (*Shabbos* 18b) suggests two more ways in which it is permissible to leave uncooked food on the fire. They are *kidrah chaisa* and *garma chaya*.

Kidrah chaisa means that the pot of food is completely raw. Since it is not possible to cook it in time for the Friday night meal, there is no concern that one will adjust the fire to speed up its cooking. (Since it will be ready by the daytime meal without touching it.) According to the mainstream opinion, this leniency only applies to foods such as meat or chicken which require substantial cooking. Additionally, some authorities question the validity of this leniency in modern times when a stovetop burner can cook meat in a relatively short period of time. The leniency would however apply to a slow cooker that cannot be adjusted to cook within an hour or two. As such, it would be permissible to put one's *cholent* in a crock pot if he turns it on about half an hour before sunset. In this way its contents would not reach the temperature of *yad soledes bo* (considered the beginning of cooking) until after *Shabbos* begins.

Garma chaya means that one adds a single raw piece of meat to his pot right before *Shabbos*. See however the *Chazon Ish* who claims that this leniency does not apply, practically speaking. He asserts that one cannot add the piece immediately before *Shabbos* in order to avoid *chilul Shabbos*. However, if he adds it several minutes before, the piece has already begun to cook in the hot pot of food by the time *Shabbos* begins. Once food has begun to cook, the leniency of *garma chaya* no longer applies. Others disagree for several reasons. (A practical solution would be to turn off the half cooked *cholent* an hour before *Shabbos*, and add decent sized piece of frozen meat closer to *Shabbos*.)



THE STEIPLER

23 Av 5745

In the late 1800's, R' Chaim Peretz Kanievsky, a *shochet* and *talmid chacham* living in Hornesteipel was windowed at the age of sixty, and sought a *beracha* from the Hornesteipel *rebbe*, who was a son-in-law of the *Divrei Chaim*. The *rebbe* encouraged him to remarry saying that if he did, he would merit to add sons to his family of girls. The *rebbe's beracha* came to fruition and R' Chaim Peretz and his young wife had three sons, the first of whom they named R' Yaakov Yisroel, who later became known as 'the Steipler'.

In his youth, R' Yaakov Yisroel fell ill and suffered permanent hearing loss. His father taught him until the age of ten when he was sent to learn in a *Talmud Torah* out of town. About a year later, R' Chaim Peretz passed away and young Yaakov Yisroel returned home to be with his mother, however when the *Alter of Novardok's* *talmidim* passed through Hornesteipel looking to recruit *bochurim* for the *yeshiva*, his mother jumped at the opportunity to send her oldest son away to a place where he could devote himself to *Torah* study and be provided with food, which was something his poor mother was unable to do.

At age nineteen, R' Yaakov Yisroel was sent to Rogatchov to open a branch in the *Novardok* network of *Yeshivos*, which spanned throughout Russia. During this time, he was drafted into the Russian Army to fight in the *Bolshevik Revolution*, and with tremendous *siyata di'shmaya*, R' Yaakov Yisroel remained committed to *shemiras ha'mitzvos* with *chumros* and great *hidurim*, in spite of the tremendous challenging circumstances.

After escaping across the Polish border, he went to learn in Bialystok under Rav Avrohom Yoffen, a son-in-law of the *Alter*. After seeing the *Steipler's* *seforim* in print, the *Chazon Ish*, who was then already in Bnei Brak, suggested Rav Yaakov Yisrael as a match for his sister and they got married. He then went on to become *Rosh Yeshiva* in the *Novardok* branch in Pinsk and in 1934 they moved to Eretz Yisrael and settled in Bnei Brak near the *Chazon Ish*.

The *Steipler Gaon* spent the rest of his life shunning the limelight, despite being the unofficial successor of his brother-in-law, the *Chazon Ish*, upon his *petira* in 1953. He spent most of his time in his modest surroundings learning *Torah*. Throngs of people came to learn from him, ask him questions, seek his advice and receive his *beracha*. He was a role model of uncompromising determination in observing *halacha*.

His concern and sensitivity for others was tremendous. One year just before *Purim*, a *talmid chacham* in Bnei Brak passed away suddenly. A few weeks later the *Steipler* realized that the *almanac* will sit down to the *Pesach seder* without her husband and only then remember that her husband ate *hand matzos* at the *seder*. Understanding that she probably wouldn't have bought *hand matza* for herself, she would be even more pained at the *seder*, and so he sent her some of his *hand matzos*. In order to avoid what might be deemed as inappropriate for him to send a gift the a woman, he told the *shaliach* to simply say that the *Steipler* gave him this *matza* to give to someone who needs it.