



Torah U'Tefilah

A Collection of Inspiring Insights

בס"ד

ה' תשרי
5 Tishrei

❧ Besamei HaTorah ... Beneath the Surface

By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

ויאמר אלהם בן מאה ועשרים שנה אנכי היום (לא:ב)

He said to them, "I am one hundred and twenty years old today (31:2)

The Torah did not have to write 'today', what is it teaching with the word 'today'? This is what Moshe said to Klal Yisroel, "Today, my days and years have been completed", to teach you that HaKadosh Baruch Hu sits and completes the years of Tzadikim from day to day, and from month to month, as it says (Shemos 23:26): 'את מספר ימך אמלא', 'I will fill the number of your days'.

(see Rashi who quotes Rosh Hashanah 11a)

❧ Parshah Thoughts – Ideas and Reflections – Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

As Moshe prepared to depart from this world, he stressed the leadership of Yehoshua. He uses peculiar language when speaking to Yehoshua, and he says, "You will enter [Savo] the land with the nation" (31:7), instead of "You will bring [Savi] the nation into the land". The Or HaChaim explains that Moshe did this on purpose to emphasize that everything is truly from Hashem, and we are only messengers of His. This is something important to always keep in mind, and particularly in these days preceding Yom Kippur. Hashem is in control of everything in our lives. He is in charge, and anyone that we happen to encounter is only a messenger of Hashem.

❧ Working on our Middos

The Chofetz Chaim used to ask, if a person is presented with opportunities to perform two different Mitzvos at the same time, one that is easy to fulfill and one that is difficult to fulfill, and he can only perform one of them, which Mitzvah should he choose to perform? The Chofetz Chaim offers a Mashal to explain. A man was looking to purchase a valuable gem. However, he knew very little about what to look for in a precious gem, and he had no idea how to determine if the prices the merchants were offering him were the true value, or if he was being taken advantage of. When discussing this with a friend, he was advised to hire an expert in gem appraisals to assist him in his hunt for a precious stone. The Chofetz Chaim explains that the same is true when it comes to Mitzvos. When we want to know the worth of a Mitzvah, we can always turn to a certifiable expert: the Yetzer Hara. The Yetzer Hara 'deals' with Mitzvos constantly. He knows the value of each one, and he attempts to convince people to refrain from performing these Mitzvos accordingly. Therefore, if we are confronted with two Mitzvos, one more difficult than the other, we have our answer about which one is worth more, because the Yetzer Hara will exert more effort to dissuade us from performing the more valuable Mitzvah. The Mitzvah we find more difficult to do must be the one that is higher in value, and therefore, it must be the one we should try our hardest to perform. By keeping the proper perspective, we can overcome the challenges the Yetzer Hara places before us, especially during this time of year. The value of a Mitzvah can be gauged by how difficult it is for us to perform, and if we are equipped with this knowledge, we can better prepare to enter Yom Kippur!

פרשת וילך תשפ"ו

Parshas Vayeilech 5786 Shabbos Shuvah

Compiled by: Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg
Staten Island Z'manim

Erev Shabbos:

Plag HaMinchah: 5:31

Candle Lighting: 6:28

Sh'kiah: 6:46 Tzeis: 7:26

Shabbos Kodesh:

Sof Z'man Krias Shema:

Mogen Avraham: 9:12 Gra: 9:48

Sof Z'man Tefillah (Shacharis): 10:47

Chatzos: 12:47 Sh'kiah: 6:44

Havdalah: Tzeis HaKochavim: 7:26

Rabbeinu Tam (72 minutes): 7:57

(some say 8:06)

Next Week: Ha'azinu

Candle Lighting: 6:16

❧ The Siddur Speaks

Rav Refael Hillel, zt"l, taught that if you look at the 19 Brachos of Shemoneh Esrei, there are many Nuschaos, versions, to these Brachos. There is Nusach Sfard, Nusach Ashkenaz, Nusach HaAri, and Nusach Teiman, and all of these versions have their roots and origins in holiness, and they are all correct for those who follow them. Even in the first Brachah of Avos, the first Brachah of Shemoneh Esrei, there are variations. The Ashkenazim say V'Koneih Ha'kol, and the Sfardim say Koneih Ha'kol. There is only one Brachah in the entire Shemoneh Esrei that there is no dispute over, and all the versions have it the exact same way, and that is the Brachah of Hashiveinu. We say: Hashiveinu Avinu L'Sorasecha, Bring us back, our Father, to Your Torah, V'Karveinu Malkeinu LaAvodasecha, and bring us near, our King, to Your service, V'Hachazireinu BiSeshuva Sheleima Lifanecha, and return us in perfect Teshuvah before You. Baruch Atah Hashem, HaRotzeh BiSeshuvah, Blessed are You Hashem, Who desires Teshuvah. This Brachah is the same for everyone because it discusses things that are the same for everyone: the Torah, doing Teshuvah, and everyone together doing Avodah before Hashem. Also, when we request to learn Torah, we say Hashiveinu Avinu L'Sorasecha, that You Hashem, **our Father**, should bring us back to Torah. There is no other mention of Avinu, our Father, in the rest of Shemoneh Esrei, except for the Brachah of Sim Shalom where we say, Barcheinu Avinu Kulanu K'Echad, Bentch us, **our Father**, all of us as one, and even there, we also mention the Torah, Ki B'Or Panecha Nasata Lanu Hashem Elokeinu **Toras Chaim**, V'Ahavas Chesed, because with the light of Your face, Hashem, You gave us **the Torah of life and a love of kindness**. In all the rest of the Brachos, we don't see the word Avinu. Not in Refaeinu, or in Bareich Aleinu. Only in Hashiveinu and Sim Shalom when it appears next to a mention about the Torah. Why is this? Rav Hillel explains from the Rishonim that when we turn to Hashem and make a request for Torah, we are saying, "You, Hashem, are our Father, and the Halachah is that a father is obligated to teach his son Torah." Therefore, we say Hashiveinu Avinu L'Sorasecha, bring us back, our Father, to Your Torah!

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

Rav Aharon Yosef Baksht, *zt"l*, known as Reb Archik, the *Rav* of Lomza, was once approached by two women with a *Din Torah*. They were neighbors who shared a clothesline, and they each claimed an entire wash of clothing was her own. Reb Archik told them to leave the laundry with him and he would announce his ruling the following morning. After the women left, he took some of his own clothing and mixed it together with the bundle they had left. The next day, when the two women came back to see him, he called one of them in and showed her the laundry. She immediately picked out her laundry and separated Reb Archik's clothing from it, and said, "Only these are mine." Reb Archik then asked her to wait outside. He then reshuffled his clothing into the pile and then asked the other woman to look at the laundry. The second woman quickly scanned the pile of clothes and said, "This entire pile of laundry is mine, not hers!" Unwittingly, she displayed her dishonesty, and the city of Lomza was amazed over the practical wisdom of their *Rav*!

Working on our Middos

Rav Yosef Viener was once on a plane that was almost ready to take off when a young child came on and sat down in the empty seat next to him. The boy seemed to be traveling alone, and he looked very relaxed and calm about it, not anxious to be alone on a plane. Feeling a slight responsibility to look after him, Rabbi Viener asked the boy if anyone was with him. The boy simply answered, "My father is here, but you can't see him." Not knowing what he had gotten himself into and thinking the worst, Rabbi Viener began to look around at the other passengers to see if he could see someone that might be this boy's father. The boy explained, "The reason you can't see him is because my father is the pilot and he's the one who is flying the plane." Rabbi Viener sat back and reflected how this young child was too little to realize how powerful the words that he had just spoken were. Life is sometimes just like that, where we feel like we are on a plane, and sense that things are spinning out of control. We conclude that there must be no one flying the plane because things are in such disarray. But, when we realize that *our Father is here but we can't see Him* because He is the pilot, we can just sit back and relax because *Hashem* has everything under control. When we understand that *Hashem*, our Father, is 'flying the plane,' we will also be able to sit and be calm, without anxiety, and without feeling that we are ever alone!

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

Rabbi Yonasan Rietti taught how it is one's obligation to take control of his mind and thoughts, and keep them positive. Just like *Hashem* ended the creation of each day with the words '*Ki Tov*', '*It is good*,' and even on the sixth day when Adam and Chava did an *Aveirah*, we find the words '*Ki Tov*,' we have to train our minds to see all aspects of our lives as good. *Teshuvah*, he explained, is the ultimate example of a *Mitzvah* that involves training our minds. We must have regret for our past *Aveiros*, but we must also have a healthy and positive focus on our future!

During the *Aseres Yimei Teshuvah* in Brisk, in 1905, there was a young man who was far from *Torah* observance. He had severed all ties with *Yiddishkeit*, and he went out of his way to go against the *Torah* in an offensive and public way. He seemed to enjoy giving pain to the *Frum* people of the city who were ashamed of him when they saw his disgraceful behavior. This man also did not spare Rav Chaim *Brisker*, the *Rav* of the city, from his obnoxious behavior. He would purposely wait outside Rav Chaim's home on *Shabbos* morning, and just as Rav Chaim would leave for *Shul*, the man would light a cigarette. Eventually, this young man was drafted into the Russian army. One day, for no reason, he took out his gun and fired a shot in the direction of a picture of Czar Nikolai. This was considered a very serious offense, and one of the other soldiers informed the authorities about what he did, and he was sentenced to death in Brisk by firing squad. A Jew from Brisk who was close to the mayor of the city, learned that the mayor was willing to arrange a pardon for the young man, on condition that he would leave town and never return, in addition to giving a five thousand ruble 'donation' to the mayor. The man went to visit Rav Chaim *Brisker*, and told him about this. Rav Chaim brought the community leaders together in his house and announced that the five thousand rubles must be collected immediately from the community funds, and any amount that was missing should be given from their own pockets! The men, all wealthy and *Frum* community leaders, unanimously objected. They said that this man had been a major force in trying to uproot *Torah* in Brisk and it was perfectly fitting that he be put before a firing squad. That would fulfill the *Torah*'s words to destroy the evil from them. But Rav Chaim disagreed, and said those words only apply when there is a *Sanhedrin*. One of those present, a *Talmid Chacham*, quoted the *Rambam* in *Hilchos Eidus* (11:10), which teaches that it is prohibited to protect the life of a *Rasha*. Rav Chaim answered by quoting the *Shitah Mekubetzes* at the end of *Bava Kamma*, which states that this rule applies only when the *Gedolei Ha'dor* have come together and decided that there is a clear need to allow the *Rasha* to be killed, like if this would prevent a massive loss of *Emunah* in *Hashem*, and he pointed out that in fact, the *Rambam* himself writes this in his commentary to the *Mishnah* in *Chulin*. "However," he added, "In this case, to our great sadness, even if he were to be given the death penalty, there is no lack of similar *Resha'im*, and therefore, not all conditions of the *Halachah* have been met." Although they could not dispute Rav Chaim's arguments, they still refused to raise the money, but he would not give up in his effort to change their minds. On *Erev Yom Kippur*, just after *Minchah*, the *Shul* was filled with an overflow crowd, and Rav Chaim asked for quiet and made an announcement. He proclaimed that the leaders of the congregation would not be allowed to go home to eat the *Seudah HaMafsekas*, the meal eaten right before the fast, while a Jew sits in jail awaiting the death penalty. The money must be withdrawn immediately from the public funds and brought to the authorities. He said, "If this is not done, I will cancel *Kol Nidrei*! I will lock the *Shul*, and everyone can *Daven* at home tonight!" This caused a commotion in the *Shul*, but the community leaders agreed to follow the *Rav*'s decision. They got the five thousand rubles, and together with Rav Chaim, went to the mayor's office, and when they delivered the money, the young man was set free. During this whole time, it had gotten very late in the day, and there was no time for them to get home before the fast would start. Rav Chaim and the delegation had missed the *Seudah HaMafsekas*, and they went straight from the mayor's office right back to *Shul* for *Kol Nidrei*. This was the extent that Rav Chaim *Brisker* went to, to always help a fellow *Yid*!

Mazel Tov to Nosson Winzelberg on becoming a Bar Mitzvah!
May you bring much Nachas to the family and to Klal Yisroel!!

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