

# *Torah Wellsprings*

*Collected thoughts  
from  
Rabbi Elimelech  
Biderman  
Shlita*

*Vayakheil - Pekudei*





# Torah WELLSPRINGS

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# Torah Wellsprings - Vayakheil - Pekudei - HaChodesh

## Becoming a Vessel to Receive Parnassah

Rebbe Aizik of Kaliv zt'l asked a merchant, "Do you have potatoes?"

"No, I don't."

"Do you have a basket?"

"No, I don't have that either."

Rebbe Aizik commented to his gabbai, "He doesn't have a basket, and therefore he doesn't have potatoes."

The point is that in order to receive *shefa*, bounty, a utensil is required to obtain the blessings.

The Navi (Malachim 2, 4) says that the wife of Navi Ovadyah told Elisha that her husband was niftar and that a creditor threatened to take her two sons as slaves for the payment.

Elisha asked her, "What do you have in your house?"

She replied that she had a jar of oil.

"Borrow empty vessels from your neighbors..." The oil in her jar became like a fountain, and she poured and filled all the empty vessels. When all the vessels in the home were full, and there were no more, the oil stopped. This is because one can't receive *shefa* if he doesn't have where to put it.

The Chofetz Chaim told a mashal of an oil merchant who came to a town to sell oil. After making some sales, there were no more utensils for the oil. The townspeople wanted to buy, and the merchant wanted to

sell, but without vessels, no sales were possible.

This whole idea is very pertinent to the *Yomim Tovim*. Hashem wants to give us a lot of *shefa*, bounty during the holy days, but we must become a proper vessel to receive the bounty. If we aren't a vessel, we can't receive Hashem's blessings.

We turn ourselves into vessels by studying about the *yom tov*, by desiring the *mitzvos* of *yom tov*, with *tefillos*, and by avoiding bad deeds which can turn into improper vessels. The Yeshuos Moshe of Vizhnitz zt'l says that הכנה (preparation) is gematriya מ"ה ל"ב (mind and heart). We prepare for a *yom tov* by studying about it and with the yearning and inspirations of the heart.

Vessels are also required to receive *parnassah*. Hashem sends us *parnassah*, but we need to be able to receive it.

One kind of vessel is hishtadlus. Hishtadlus creates a vessel in which Hashem places the *parnassah*.

Rebbe Mordechai of Neshchiz zt'l says that in the desert, the mann was packaged in טל, dew.<sup>1</sup> Today, *parnassah* is essentially the mann in a more physical form, and it is also packaged in טל, the מלאכות, thirty-nine categories of work that people do to earn their *parnassah*. This is the package, the vessel, with which Hashem gives us *parnassah*. Hashem sends us *parnassah*, but we need a vessel to receive it. The vessel is the hishtadlus.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Rashi Shemos 16:13 explains that the mann fell on the dew, and then טל, dew fell on top, and "it was as if the mann was packaged in a box."

2. It states (in this week's *parashah*), (35:1) ...ואלה הדברים...וביום השביעי... From the *gematriya* on these words, the Gemara (*Shabbos* 97) teaches that there are thirty-nine forbidden *melachos* on Shabbos. אלה is *gematriya* 36. דברים is plural, thus hints at another 2. The ה of הדברים is one more. Together, they equal 39, indicating the thirty-nine types of work forbidden on Shabbos.

But there is another vessel before the hishtadlus, and that is when one avoids anger and *machlokes* and he is at peace with everyone. The *Zohar* says, מִיָּנִיָּה מִתְּבָרְכִין כָּל שֵׁתָּא, "From [Shabbos], the six days of the week receive their blessings." We receive brachos for parnassah on Shabbos, and the vessel to receive the brachos is *shalom*, as Chazal (*Uktzin* 3:12) say, לֹא מִצָּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא כְּלִי, מחזיק ברכה לישראל אלא השלום, "Hakadosh Baruch Hu didn't find a vessel to contain His brachos to Yisrael other than peace."

It states (35:3), לֹא תִבְעֵרוּ אֵשׁ בְּכָל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם בְּיוֹם, השבת, "Do not kindle a fire in all your dwelling places on the Shabbos day." The *Zohar* says this is referring to the fire of anger. We must be cautious not to turn on this fire on Shabbos because then we will lose all the brachos and wealth that can come from Shabbos.<sup>3</sup>

The Chasam Sofer zt'l explains that on Fridays, the yetzer hara works extra hard to get people angry and put them in a bad mood to prevent them from receiving Hashem's brachos. Therefore, the Torah obligates us, לֹא תִבְעֵרוּ אֵשׁ... בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת, that we should avoid anger on Shabbos.

Reb Moshe Aryeh Freund zt'l (the rav of Yerushalayim) heard the following story from his father-in-law. His father-in-law and a friend were in the *beis hachayim* (cemetery) in Lemberg, and they saw a *kever*, which said, "Here lies the tzaddik *nistar*, a hidden tzaddik..." It was alongside the *kever* of the rav of Lemberg.

"Who was this person?" they wondered, "and why did he merit to be buried next to the Rav of Lemberg?"

They went to the *chevra Kadisha* who also didn't know but said that for a fee, they could open up their files (*pinkus* of the *chevra kadisha*) and check. After paying the price, the

*chevra kadisha* searched their notes and found the following:

Once, the Lemberger Rav went to the *mikvah* on Erev Shabbos, and a poor person from Lemberg was there. The poor man lightly tapped the Lemberger Rav with a broom on the back and said, "You fasted today, and you fasted yesterday. So did I."

He tapped him again with the broom and said, "You fasted the entire week, and so did I because I didn't have money to buy food. The difference between us will be seen tonight because you will have challah, fish, soup, and a full meal, but all I will have is dry bread and a drop of water. But if you hear that a cat ate your portion of fish and you become angry, you will lose all the merits you earned from your fast."

That night, the Rebbetzin didn't serve fish. She told her husband, the Rav of Lemberg, that a cat had eaten his portion. He immediately remembered the queer words the poor person told him, which helped him overcome his anger.

His next thought was that this poor person was certainly a great tzaddik. How else did he know that a cat will eat his fish (and how else did he know that he fasted all week)?

He told his *shamash* to bring the poor man to him.

When the *shamash* arrived, the poor man said, "I am from the thirty-six hidden tzaddikim, and now that I've been revealed, I will need to be *niftar* and leave the world. It is a shame that the Lemberger Rav didn't come to call me. I would have told him secrets of the Torah."

The *shamash* quickly returned and told what he heard. The Lemberger Rav rushed to the poor man's home, but it was too late.

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3. The Remak zt'l and others teach that during the weekdays, for the sake of *chinuch* and other needs, one is permitted to pretend to be angry, but one is never allowed to feel actual anger in his heart. However, on Shabbos, even a mock, external expression of anger is prohibited.

Reb Moshe Aryeh repeated this story, which he heard from his father-in-law, and added:

Take notice of the importance of avoiding anger (especially the severity of getting angry on Shabbos). The tzaddik *nistar* allowed himself to be revealed, although he knew this meant his demise. He did so to prevent the Lemberger Rav from becoming angry.

Once, early Friday morning, the Beis Aharon zt'l was traveling with his son, Reb Asher, when they saw smoke coming out of every chimney. The women of this town were already up, baking and cooking for Shabbos. The Beis Aharon said to his son, "Women could obtain *ruach hakodesh* from their cooking and baking for Shabbos, but anger ruins it."<sup>4</sup>

The Gemara (*Gittin* 52) tells us about a couple that the Satan caused them to fight

every Friday. The holy *tana*, Reb Meir, came to their home on Friday because he knew they wouldn't fight in his presence. He went there for three weeks in a row, and then Reb Meir heard the Satan say, "Woe! Reb Meir sent this man out of the house."

The Chasam Sofer explains that this couple was an example of what happens in many homes on Fridays. The yetzer hara tries to disrupt the peace in many homes on Fridays to prevent them from receiving Hashem's blessings.

The holy sefarim say that when your wife or daughter etc., do something wrong on Erev Shabbos (he/she cooked the wrong food, didn't clean properly, and there are countless other examples), you shouldn't become angry. Be aware that the culprit is the yetzer hara, as he desires to stir up a fight in your home on Fridays. With this awareness in mind, it will be easier for people to avoid becoming angry at this time.<sup>5</sup>

**4.** The Bardichover Rav zt'l said the same statement regarding cleaning for Pesach. When women clean for Pesach, they should attain *ruach hakodesh*, but anger ruins it.

The Reishis Chachmah zt'l writes in the name of his teacher, the Remak zt'l, that erev Shabbos, we should prepare large *lecht*, make the bed, and remove all cobwebs from the home. "And I will reveal a secret: These [cobwebs] are the *kelipos* that try to ruin the shalom bayis."

The Kaf HaChaim (*siman* 250) says to remove the spiderwebs before the 5<sup>th</sup> hour of the day (an hour before *chatzos*) because that is when the light of Shabbos begins to shine.

Rebbe Hershele of Zidichov zt'l recommends spreading the Shabbos tablecloth Friday before midday as a segulah for shalom bayis.

For a segulah for refuah, the Chofetz Chaim zt'l advised that wine and challos should be on the table already on Friday morning, before daybreak.

Reb Efraim Wachsman Shlita had a melamed who survived the Holocaust. When the children of his class misbehaved, he would shout at them in a foreign language, which the children assumed were curses in Hungarian.

At the end of the year, some children asked him mechilah for causing him distress to the extent that he would curse them in Hungarian. He replied, "Chas v'Shalom! I never cursed you. The words I said were (39:10-13) סִמְכוּ יָרְקוּ וּבִרְקוּ... אִזְמַרְגְּדִין שְׁבִיזוּ וּסְבַהֲלִים... קִנְיַרִי מִרְקָא יַעֲזִי עֲנָא... כְּרוּם יִמָּא וּבוֹרְלָא וּפְנִטְרִי which are Unkelos's translation for the twelve stones that were placed in the choshen. The twelve stones represent the twelve shevatim. To help me not become angry with you, I reminded myself that you are all holy Yidden, compared to diamonds and gems set in the choshen.

5. The words of the Gemara are, ווי דאפקה ר' מאיר לההוא גברא מביתיה, "Woe, Reb Meir drove *this man* out of his



## The Greatness of Bnei Yisrael

Some months have twenty-nine days, and some have thirty days. Who determines how long the month will be, and when is *Rosh Chodesh*? The *beis din* determines. Sometimes there are leap years, and an extra month is added to the year. Who decides when to make a leap year? Once again, this is decided by the scholars of the *beis din*. The Midrash learns this from the pasuk (*Shemos* 12), הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם, "Rosh chodesh shall be for you..." It is up to the Jewish nation to decide when *Rosh chodesh* will be.

The Midrash (*Shemos Rabba* 15:2) states, "The *malachim* ask Hakadosh Baruch Hu, 'When will it be yom tov?'... Hashem replies, 'Me and you will agree with whatever the Jewish nation decides. It is up to them to decide whether to make a leap year or not...'"

Hakadosh Baruch Hu says to Yisrael, 'Before, I had the strength... but from now on, it's in your hands. When you say yes, it's yes; when you say no, it's no. No matter what, הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם, establishing *Rosh chodesh* is up to you. If you want to establish a leap year, I will agree with you.'"

The Chidushei HaRim *zt'l* was ecstatic with this Midrash. He would say, "The power is in our hands! When we say yes, it is yes, and when we say no, it is no. Everything is up to us! If we knew the powers we have, we wouldn't waste a moment!"

We say in *Ashrei* (*Tehillim* 145:12), לְהוֹדִיעַ לְבָנֵי הָאָדָם גְּבוּרָתוֹ. The Yesod v'Shores HaAvodah *zt'l* says גְּבוּרָתוֹ refers to the strength and greatness of the Jewish nation. The pasuk is saying, לְהוֹדִיעַ לְבָנֵי אָדָם גְּבוּרָתוֹ, "reveal to people

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home." We wonder why the Gemara refers to the yetzer hara as הַיֵּצֶר הָרָע, "that man"? The yetzer hara isn't a man.

We can answer that the Gemara refers to "that man," the husband. Reb Meir taught the husband that he shouldn't be home too much on Fridays, which often helps shalom bayis.

The Gemara (*Brachos* 56:) says, "There are three signs of peace: the river, the bird, and the kettle." When one sees a river, a bird, or a kettle in his dream, it is a sign that he will have peace. The Gemara also says that if one sees a kettle in his dreams, he should wake up and say (*Yeshayah* 26:12), ד' יַשְׁפּוּת שְׁלוֹם לָנוּ, "Hashem, arrange peace for us."

Why is a kettle a sign of peace?

The Maharsha explains that water and fire are opposites, but when a kettle goes between them, they can coexist and unite to create a better product.

The kettle represents peace as it creates a barrier between two opposing forces. So we see that, at times, division is beneficial for the sake of keeping the peace. The husband spending less time in the house on Friday is often a good recipe for shalom bayis.

Another counsel for shalom is humor.

Reb Chaim Shmuelevitz *zt'l* was once giving a *drashah* in his yeshiva. A nudnick there interrupted Reb Chaim and asked, "Why are the mouth and the eyes set in the face while the ears and the nose protrude?"

Reb Chaim replied, "The ears and the nose protrude to hold up the eyeglasses," everyone laughed, and he continued teaching.

With wisdom and humor, he avoided anger. Humor can be used in the home, as well, to increase peace.

There was a woman who shouted and hollered at her husband and then poured a bucket of water on him. He responded, "I'm not surprised. After thunder and lightning always come the pouring rain."

6. The literal translation is: "To inform human beings of His mighty deeds...."

their greatness." Let them know what they can accomplish with their Torah, Tefillah, and Mitzvos. Let them know how powerful they are.

### New Beginnings

The literal translation of חודש is new, and therefore החודש הזה can be translated as, לכם, the ability to become like new, לכם, is in your hands. Every Rosh Chodesh, and especially Rosh Chodesh Nisan and Shabbos HaChodesh, a person has the potential to improve his ways and become new.

Reb Yaakov Eliyahu Lazar zt'l was by the Shinover Rav zt'l for Shabbos Parah. On Sunday, when he came to ask the Rebbe permission to leave (*gezegen*), the Rebbe asked him, "Are you leaving so soon?"

The *gabbai* quickly said, "No, Reb Lazar will remain with us for a few more days."

The Shinover Rav replied, "Good because it's very important for a chasid to be with his Rebbe on Shabbos HaChodesh since on this Shabbos, one has the potential to become a new person."

Reb Lazar would often speak nostalgically of that Shabbos. He said it's impossible to repeat what he saw that Shabbos. But he did reveal that when he davened אהבה רבה in *Shacharis*, he was overcome by his emotions. He left the beis medresh and cried profusely from *deveikus*. He felt that he had become a new person.

People asked Rebbe Ben Tzion of Bobov zt'l, "How long is a person young?"

He replied, "As long as he is prepared to turn over a new leaf, he is young."<sup>7</sup>

At *mattan Torah*, it states (*Shemos* 24:5), וישלחו, נערי בני ישראל ויעלו זבחים שלמים לה, "He sent the youths of Bnei Yisrael, and they sacrificed *korbanos*..." Rashi writes that the נערי בני ישראל, the youths of Bnei Yisrael, were the *bechorim*, the firstborns.

Why are the first-borns called נערי, youths? A person can be eighty, and he might be a bechor. The Sfas Emes (*Mishpatim* 5645) asks, "Firstborns are older than the brothers born after them. So why does the Torah call them נערי, youths?"

The Sfas Emes answers that the nature of a *bechor* is to have כח התחדשות, the power of starting anew. They are called youths not because of their age but because of their youthful attitude. Because of this attitude, Hashem chose them to sacrifice the *korbanos*.

The Yerushalmi (*Taanis* 4:5) states that if a fish can't swim against the current, it isn't a kosher species. This suggests that a "kosher" person is someone who can go against the current to change one's ways and do what's right.

The Torah tells us (*Devarim* 16:22), ולא תקים לך, מצבה אשר שנה ה' אלקיך, "You shall not erect for yourselves a *matzeivah*, which Hashem, your G-d, hates."

The מצבה represents a person fixed in his ways (like a *matzeivah* that is set and fixed). It alludes to people who don't want to improve their ways. "If it was good enough until now, it doesn't need to change," they say. They don't realize that their deeds weren't

7. The Beis Avraham zt'l writes, "החדש הזה לכם ראש", means the month of Nisan is *mesugal* to correct one's ראש, thoughts. Even if his thoughts were filled with temptations or lacking *emunah*, *rachmana litzlan*, he can become like a new person this month."

It states (*Brachos* 4:), "Whoever says *Ashrei* three times each day is a בן עולם הבא; he will certainly merit Olam HaBa. Reb Zalman Brizel zt'l explained that this is because we conclude *Ashrei* with the words, ואנחנו נברך, "We will praise Hashem from now..." The key word is מעתה, to begin from now. When one starts anew, three times each day — always seeking to serve Hashem better than before — he is a ben Olam HaBa. Reb Zalman would say, מעתה, "I am starting now. I am a new Zalman."



good enough until now. The Torah says, ולא תקים לך מצבה אשר שנה ה' אלקדך, "Don't be set in your ways. Hashem hates this 'no-growth' attitude and loves those who are always ready to turn over a new leaf and improve their ways.

### Never Too Late

The Torah emphasizes that the mitzvah of *Rosh Chodesh* was given to the Jewish people when they were still living in the impure land of Mitzrayim, as it states, ויאמר ה' אל משה ואל אהרן בארץ מצרים לאמר החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים, "Hashem said to Moshe and Aharon in the land of Mitzrayim, saying, 'This month shall be for you the beginning of months...'"<sup>8</sup> The Torah tells us that even people who are in the impure land of Mitzrayim and were in the forty-ninth level of *tumah*, even they have the opportunity of החדש הזה לכם, of becoming new. It is never too late to improve.

There was a bachur who was thrown out of yeshiva. The Klausenberger Rebbe zt'l spoke to the bachur, and the bachur promised that he would improve his ways. The Klausenberger Rebbe immediately called for a meeting with the *mashgiach* of the yeshiva. The Rebbe told the *mashgiach* that the bachur promised not to continue in his bad ways anymore.

The *mashgiach* responded, "He has promised this to me thousands of times, and then he goes back to his old ways."

The Klausenberger Rebbe tugged his white beard and said, "I'm already old. During these years, I promised Hashem more than a thousand times that I would improve, and I haven't done so yet. According to what you're saying, should I give up? Is there no hope for me? But this isn't so. As long as a Yid lives, he has the potential to improve his ways..."

Rabbeinu Nisim Gaon (quoted in *Seder HaDoros, Tana'im and Amaro'im*, letter ג) tells the following story:

Nosson, a sinful man, once had the opportunity to commit a terrible sin, but he controlled himself. A few days later, Rabbi Akiva saw him riding on a donkey, and Rabbi Akiva perceived that Nosson's face was shining like the midday sun, and above his head was a halo of holiness. Rabbi Akiva asked his students, "Who is that man?"

"It's Nosson, the lowly sinner."

"Do you see anything above his head?"

"No. We don't see anything."

"Bring him to me, quickly."

Rabbi Akiva said to Nosson, "My son, an aura of light is glowing on top of your head, so I know you will merit Olam HaBa. Tell me, what good deed have you done?"

Nosson told him that he did not give in to his temptations, and held back from transgressing a grave sin.

Reb Akiva replied, "Indeed, you did a great deed, and Hashem therefore gave you an aura of light above your head. This is your reward in this world. In the next world, you will certainly become much holier and greater because of this good deed. Now, my son, listen to me. Sit before me, and I will teach you a lot of Torah."

Nosson became Rabbi Akiva's student. Within a short time, he became a scholar, the holy *tana*, Reb Nosson Tzutzisa, mentioned in Chazal.

This story teaches us that it is never too late to begin. Despite his late start, Nosson Tzutzisa made a turnaround and became a great tzaddik and scholar.

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8. The words בארץ מצרים seem extra because where should they be, other than in Mitzrayim? We know that they didn't leave yet!

The Birkas Avraham zt'l once traveled to Italy with his uncle, Reb Zelig Lider, who was an esrog merchant. They stopped at a hotel in Trieste and found a small *sefer* there. The *sefer* discusses what we say in Shacharis, מלך עושה בראשית, that Hashem creates the world anew each day. The *sefer* asks: Why does Hashem create the world anew? Hashem could have created the world once, and it would stand forever.

He answers that the daily creation of the world is to remind man that just as the world becomes new, he can become new, too.

Friday night, in the zemiros, we say, מלך עושה בראשית, סומך נופלים, that Hashem gives support and encouragement to those who have fallen. How does Hashem encourage us? מלך עושה בראשית, each day, Hashem creates the world anew. And this is our reminder that we can also improve our ways and become new.

Reb Shimshon Pinkus zt'l told the following *mashal*:

A town was situated at the bottom of the mountain, and the supermarket was on top. The townspeople had to climb up and down the mountain for their shopping, which was very hard for them.

There was a *baal chesed* in town. He bought a van to help people get to and from the supermarket. He advertised that he would go up and down the mountain three times a day and take whoever came free of charge.

The van filled up to capacity on each trip to the store. He drove them to the store and then back home again.

But after a while, the wear and tear took its toll on the van. The seats were ripped in several places, the air-conditioner no longer worked, and the engine was weak. People had to push the van from outside to get the motor running.

The leaders of the town spoke with this *baal chesed* and said, "You did a great mitzvah

for our city, but it is time to get you a new van. Everyone in the town will chip in and buy it for you."

The *baal chesed* refused. He said he performed so many mitzvos with the van; how could he stop using it?

The town leaders convened and decided that if he didn't want to change the van, at least they could change the interior of the van. The exterior will be the same, but it will have a new motor, air conditioner, etc.

They came up with an excuse for why they needed to borrow the car keys for the night, and in the middle of the night, they redid his van.

In the morning, people filled up the van, and the *baal chesed* said, "Some people have to go outside to push the van," for that's what they did every morning.

They told him, "No, we don't. Put the key in the ignition and try."

He tried, and the van was working. He said, "How did this happen? Yesterday, it was so different!"

He turned on the air-conditioner, and it was working too, and they told him what had happened during the night. He said, "Externally, the van seems the same. But internally, everything is different."

The *nimshal* is that we go to sleep every night, and in the morning, we wake up like a new person. We appear the same, but we aren't the same. If we believe that we have become a new person, we can serve Hashem with renewed energy, and we might discover that things are now different. Even if we weren't able to daven with kavanah or learn well yesterday, things might have changed. Since we have become new people, new things can happen.

Consider the following *mashal* from the Chofetz Chaim zt'l: A person very much wanted to study Torah, but he just didn't understand what he was learning, so eventually, he gave up. He doesn't even try

to study Torah anymore because he knows the bitter results. Nevertheless, he still davens for success in Torah. Finally, one day, his tefillos were answered. He was granted the intelligence to study, understand, and enjoy Torah, but he doesn't know about it. He never tried again, so he isn't aware of how different things have become and doesn't know of the new abilities he was granted.

It can be compared to someone who buys a lottery ticket but doesn't check the results. But if you don't check, you might be extremely wealthy but won't know about it. So, after you daven, try again. See if things have changed. Perhaps this time, you will succeed.

We discussed success in Torah, but the lesson applies to all areas of success and growth. It could be that you received Hashem's blessings, and your deepest desires may have been granted, but you will only know if you try.

Purim has just passed, and we have become new people. We might appear the same externally, but we became new internally. (Like the van that looked the same on the outside but was different inside.) If you don't make an effort to recognize the changes that occurred and continue to act as you had previously, you will not realize how much potential is in you and how much has changed.

Similarly, Nisan is a time for change. We must believe in our potential and try to discover our true selves.

### The Heart's Yearning

It states (36:7) והמלאכה היתה דים... והותר "The work [donations for the Mishkan] was enough...and there was extra." The Or HaChaim HaKadosh asks that דים means there was exactly enough. But then it states והותר, that there was extra.

Rebbe Yissachar Dov of Belz zt'l answers that והותר refers to the pining and yearning

of the Jewish heart. The physical donations were דים, exactly enough. Every item they donated found its place in the construction of the Mishkan. But they wished and yearned to do more. That is the meaning of והותר. There was no extra material, but there was an overabundance of emotions, which are very precious to Hashem.

We say in *Boruch She'amar*, הבוחר בשירי זמרה, and Rebbe Yissachar Dov translates that this means Hashem desires the שירי זמרה, the *shirayim*, leftover of the praises, the yearnings of the heart that linger after one praises Hashem.

This is because when one praises Hashem, he wishes to say more. He wishes he would never need to stop praising Hashem. The same occurs when one performs mitzvos. He wishes he could do more. הבוחר בשירי זמרה, Hashem loves and chooses these lingering emotions of the heart.

There's a Midrash that Betzalel showed Moshe Rabbeinu the leftover extra donations, and Moshe asked Hashem what to do with them. Hashem replied, לך עשה בהם משכן העדות, "Make a Mishkan from them."

There are two difficulties with this Midrash:

1) How can Moshe make a Mishkan from them? It was extra, unnecessary materials.

2) Rebbe Yissachar Dov explained that there was no extra material! This Midrash seems to contradict that.

The answer is that the Midrash refers to the emotions that remained in the Yidden's hearts. Moshe asked Hashem,

"What should I do with these emotions? They wish they could bring more donations to the Mishkan, but they can't. What will You do with their emotions?"

Hashem replied, עשה בהם משכן העדות, turn the Yidden into a Mishkan. בהם isn't referring to the materials, but instead to the Yidden. Turn them into a Mishkan. Their desire to donate to the Mishkan is so beloved to



Hashem that Hashem wants to reside His Shechinah among them as if they were a Mishkan.

The שמן המשחה was used to sanctify the Mishkan and its utensils. The Chortkover Rebbe zt'l asks, what consecrated the space of the Mishkan? He answers that that was sanctified with the hearts of Bnei Yisrael who so wanted to donate towards building the Mishkan." This is as it states (*Shir HaShirim* 3:10), תוכו רצוף אהבה, "its midst was decked with love." The air and atmosphere inside the Mishkan were established and sanctified with the love of the Jewish nation.

Rashi (25:27) writes, "The nesi'im said, 'Let the public donate what they want, and whatever is missing, we will give.' But the people completed everything... The nesi'im said, 'What can we do?' So they brought the gems for the *choshen*. And because they were lazy, they lost a letter from their name, and it states נשם [without a *yud*]."

The Chidushei HaRim zt'l says that it doesn't seem that the nesi'im did anything wrong. Imagine a wealthy person telling a rosh yeshiva, "Try to raise as much money as you can, and whatever is lacking, I will give." Every rosh yeshiva would be very happy with such an offer.

The Chidushei HaRim explains that Hashem doesn't lack money and He didn't need our donations. As it states (*Chagay* 2:8) לי הכסף ולי הזהב, "Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold." Hashem wanted the heart of Bnei Yisrael. He wanted to see their desire to build the Mishkan. This is why the nesi'im were faulted for pushing it off for later.

Reb Eizik Charif came to a yeshiva of 300 bachurim. He presented them with a complex question in Gemara and said that the bachur who answered this question could marry his daughter.

The bachurim tried hard, and they came up with many clever ideas, but Reb Eizik Charif refuted their answers. After a few days, Reb Eizik Charif left the yeshiva to seek a chasan elsewhere.

One bachur chased after Reb Eizik Charif and said, "I know that I didn't know the answer, so I won't be the chasan, but I nevertheless want to know the answer to the question. Please tell me the answer to the question."

Reb Eizik Charif said, "Since you want to know, I want you to marry my daughter. My test aimed to find a bachur who wants to know the answer, and you passed the test. You showed me that you want to know Torah, and therefore I want for my daughter."

This story is an insight into what happens when we are tested with tests that seem beyond our abilities. Perhaps the point of the test is that we should demonstrate that we want to pass the test. If we try our best, we pass the test.

The final pasuk of the parashah is, כי ענן ה' על המשכן יומם ואש תהיה לילה בו, "For the cloud of Hashem would be on the Mishkan by day, and fire would be on it at night..." and then we shout חזק חזק ונתחזק. There is a beautiful explanation from the Chozeh of Lublin zt'l. He said it about his own life experiences. There were times when avodas Hashem went smoothly for him. He calls those times כי ענן ה' יומם day like and considers them the best times of his life. But when he became older and wiser, and he understood כי ענן ה'... יומם, that on these bright days, there was a cloud hovering over it. These times weren't as unique as he thought because there were no tests. ואש, the fire, the truly best times of his life, תהיה לילה בו, was when there were difficult tests (referred to as night). And therefore, חזק חזק ונתחזק. Be strong because the hard times of your life are the moments you can make a special nachas ruach for Hashem.<sup>9</sup>

9. The Chidushei HaRim's final words of his lifetime were on the pasuk (35:22), ויבאו האנשים על הנשים. He explains that the men made the egel and not the women. So, at that time, women were at a higher level

## Gathering of Bnei Yisrael

The Yid Hakodesh zt'l and other tzaddikim said that ויקהל is gematriya מקוה. ויקהל means gathering, and this teaches us that being among Yidden who gathered for the purpose of serving Hashem purifies us immensely.

A hint is from the pasuk (*Bamidbar* 19:9), ואסף איש טהור, when there is a gathering, there is taharah.

Another hint is from the halachah טומאה, הותרה בציבור, that communal korbanos can be brought in tumah. The Shem MiShmuel says that this demonstrates the immense purity that results from the gathering of the community. It is like their tumah vanished.

The first pasuk of the parashah states ויקהל משה את כל עדת בני ישראל ויאמר אלהם אלה, (35:1), "Moshe assembled the entire assembly of Bnei Yisrael and said to them: 'These are the things that Hashem commanded, to do them.'" The Chidushei HaRim explains that this means that Hashem commanded that we should gather.

צדיקים, רשעים, בינונים is roshei teivos for ציבור (Tiferes Shlomo). This is because all types of people make up a community; together, they are a very holy nation. The Megaleh Amukos zt'l writes that ציבור is gematriya רחמים.

The Meshech Chachmah zt'l points out that while a korban *shlomim* is *kodshim kalim* (a lighter form of kedushah), the *shlomim* becomes *kodshei kadoshim* (a higher form of kedushah) when it is a *shalmei tzibur*, a congregational *shelamim*.

Chazal say כל ביה עשרה שכינתא שריא, that whenever there are ten people, the Shechinah rests there. The Baal HaTanya (*Igeres HaKodesh*

23) writes, "I heard from my rebbes that if a malach were present when ten Yidden are gathered, even when they didn't gather to perform a mitzvah, he would be afraid to no end because the Shechinah is there, and the malach would become *batel* completely."

Rebbe Eizik of Kaliv zt'l translated שכינתא שריא that they free the Shechinah from the yesurim of galus. This happens when ten Yidden get together.

## The Mishkan of a Beis Medresh

It states (38:21), המשכן משכן העדות... עבודת הלוים, and the word משכן is written twice. Rashi says that it alludes to the churban of the two Batei HaMikdash, which were taken as a mashkon.

The Divrei Yisrael asks that the time of construction of the Mishkan doesn't seem to be an appropriate time to mourn over its destructions.

He answers that the two mishkans refer to the Beis HaMikdash and the beis medresh. One Mishkan is called עבודת הלוים, a place where the levi'im do their services and the kohanim offer korbanos. The other form of mishkan is משכן העדות, and עדות means Torah. Throughout the long galus, we always have this mishkan with us. It is the sanctuary of a beis medresh, where Yidden study Torah.

The משכן העדות is written first because the primary Mishkan is where Torah is studied.

The pasuk alludes to the churban but with an encouraging note. It tells us that even when the Beis HaMikdash will be ising, chalilah, we will always be left with the primary Mishkan, the Torah study.<sup>10</sup> As the Gemara (*Brachos* 8) states, "Hashem's only

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than men. Building the Mishkan was to atone for the egel. The men became baalei teshuvah, and Chazal say that baalei teshuvah are at a higher level than tzaddikim. Therefore, when they donated for the Mishkan, ויבאו האנשים על הנשים, the men reached a higher level than the women.

**10.** It states פקודי המשכן, and פקודי can be translated as missing. The Divrei Yisrael says that even when the Mishkan is lacking, we still have the mishkan of Torah.

place in the world is the four cubits where Torah is studied."

We wrote above from Rebbe Yissachar Dov of Belz (the Or HaChaim makes the same point) that all the money and items donated for the Mishkan went into the construction of the Mishkan; nothing remained. But there are opinions that there were surplus donations, which weren't used for the Mishkan, as this is indicated in the word (36:7) והותר.

Where did those donations go to?

The Chasam Sofer (*Toras Moshe*) says that those donations were used to build a beis medresh where Torah was studied. The beis medresh was established right next to the Beis HaMikdash.

### 100 Brachos

The *Or Zarua* (42) writes, "I knew an old yid from Vamsh called Reb Bunim who worked for the *chevra Kadisha*. Once, Reb Bunim rose early, went to the *beis knesess*, and saw someone sitting outside the *beis knesses* wearing a crown of herbs on his head. Reb Bunim feared that this person might be a *sheid* (demon).

Reb Bunim asked, "Aren't you Ploni, who died, and I buried you?"

"That's correct."

"How are things for you in that world?"

"Extremely good!"

"How did you merit this? You weren't especially pious in this world."

"This is my reward for saying the *brachos* in the *beis kneses* in a sweet voice. I am in Gen Eden, and I receive honor. Look at my torn sleeve. I show you this to prove that it is I. You tore it while dressing me in *tachrichim* (shrouds)."

"What are you wearing on your head?"

"Leaves from Gan Eden. I put them on my head so that I won't smell the bad odor of this world."

The *Or Zarua* concludes, "I write this story to teach those who have *yiras Shamayim* that they should say *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*'s praises with a sweet voice and concentration. They will merit Gan Eden."

*Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 46:3) states, ח"יב, "אדם לברך בכל יום מאה ברכות לפחות", "One is obligated to recite at least one hundred *brachos* every day."

This week's parashah mentions the one hundred silver אדנים foundations (see 38:27). The *Baal HaTurim* writes, ונגדם תקנו ק' ברכות, בכל יום, "Corresponding [the one hundred adanim, the chachamim] established the obligation to recite one hundred *brachos* daily."

It is known that a person must turn himself into a Mishkan, as it states ושכנתי בתוכם, that Hashem dwells within every Yid. Every building needs a foundation. The foundation of the Mishkan was the one hundred adanim. The *Chidushei HaRim* *zt'l* adds that the one hundred *brachos* are the foundation of the Yid's Mishkan. With his good deeds, he turns himself into a Mishkan, and the foundation of this mishkan is the one hundred *brachos* that he recites each day.

There is a close connection between adanim and *brachos*, as the *Chidushei HaRim* writes, "אדנים comes from the word אדון, master, and with *brachos*, we testify that Hashem is the Master of the entire creation." This is one of the primary reasons for the one hundred *brachos* so that we should remember the אדון, Hashem. Likewise, the *Rambam* (*Hilchos Brachos* 1:3) writes, "The *rabbanim* instituted many *brachos*...so we will always remember the Creator."

The one hundred *brachos* are also a protection.

The *Poskim* tell us that there was a time during Dovid HaMelech's rule when one



hundred people died each day. Dovid HaMelech sought the reason behind this epidemic. With his wisdom and *ruach hakadosh*, he understood that if Klal Yisrael said one hundred *brachos* each day, the plague would end.

The Levush writes, "Dovid investigated the matter and understood with his *ruach hakadosh* that the cause of the deaths was that they weren't praising and blessing Hashem properly for all the good He bestowed upon them... So Dovid established that Klal Yisrael say one hundred *brachos* each day, and since then, the plague ceased."

The *Tur* writes, "Therefore, the Chachamim established *birchas hashachar*...to fill the quota of the one hundred daily *brachos*."

Reb Shimshon Pinkus *zt'l* explained it with a *mashal*:

Two people didn't get along and weren't on speaking terms for a long time. They each turned their face away and looked the other way whenever they met. One day, one of them decided to end this bitter feud. Whenever he passed his fellow man, which occurred several times each day, he would greet him with a happy countenance and some kind words. It will be impossible for the other person to continue fighting with him. He will be forced to feel positive toward him. This is what Dovid HaMelech understood with his *ruach hakodesh*. He realized that if we praised Hashem, all barriers that separate us from Hashem would disappear.

In addition to being a protection, the one hundred *brachos* are also our source of blessings.

The *Zohar* (vol.1 76:) writes, "When a soul is ready to descend to this world, Hashem makes it swear that it will keep the mitzvos and do Hashem's will, and Hashem gives him one hundred keys..."

The keys are the daily *brachos*. These keys open up the doors for all kinds of blessings."

The *Zohar* says that this is hinted at in the words (Bereishis 12:1) *וַאֲבִרַכְךָ* , *לךְ לךְ* ... "go...and I will bless you..." The gematriya of *לךְ לךְ* is one hundred. The pasuk says that we receive Hashem's *brachos* when we say one hundred *brachos*.

## How to Say the Brachos

Now that we've seen the importance of reciting the one hundred *brachos*, we examine methods to help us say the *brachos* correctly. The Yesod v'Shores HaAvodah (*Shaar HaAshmos* 2) writes, "My beloved friends and brothers, think in your hearts, before Whom and to Whom are you saying your *brachos*..."

This is the first step. Know to Whom you are speaking.

The Yesod v'Shores HaAvodah writes, "When you say *ברוך אתה*, know that you are saying this *brachah* to the Creator. And this is literal because this is what *ברוך אתה* means. When one doesn't realize that he is literally speaking to Hashem, every wise person understands that it is as though he didn't say the *brachah*...and he is taking away Hashem's pleasure."

The *Yerushalmi* discusses whether *אתה* is part of the *brachah*. Rav says that we should say *אתה* in every *brachah*, and Shmuel said that one should only say *ברוך ד' אלקינו מלך*... The halachah is like Rav; therefore, we have a reminder in each *brachah* that we are speaking directly to Hashem.

The Gemara (*Brachos* 47.) says, *לא יזרוק ברכה מפיו* "One mustn't throw the *brachah* out of his mouth." Rashi explains that when one rushes through the *brachah*, it appears that he wants to get it over with. The Yesod v'Shores HaAvodah advises that one should pause after every two or three words when reciting *brachos* or while davening. That will help him say the *brachos* and daven with *kavanah*.

The Rabbeinu Tam in *Sefer HaYasher* (*shaar* 13) writes, "It is better a little bit that is

consistent than a lot that doesn't endure." It is, therefore a good idea to choose three or four *brachos* that you wish to say with *kavanah* and say these *brachos* well every day. It is a relatively small undertaking that can endure for a long time.

When you say three or four *brachos* well and see how easy it is to do so and how enjoyable it is to praise Hashem properly, you will be motivated to say other *brachos* with *kavanah*.

### Hints to the 100 Brachos

The *Tur* (*Orach Chaim* 46) writes, "It states (*Shmuel* 2, 23:1), הוֹקֵם עַל, 'Dovid established על' and על is *gematriya* one hundred."

It also states (*Bereishis* 12:1), לֵךְ לְךָ... וְהָיָה בְרָכָה, "Go for yourself...and you shall be a blessing." The *Zohar* (vol.1, 76:) notes that לֵךְ לְךָ is *gematriya* one hundred. By reciting one hundred *brachos*, וְהָיָה בְרָכָה, one merits receiving Hashem's *brachos*.

It is written (*Tehillim* 128:4), הִנֵּה כִּי כֵן יִבְרַךְ גִּבּוֹר, "Behold, for so is blessed the man who fears Hashem." The *Sefer HaManhig* teaches that כִּי כֵן is *gematriya* one hundred because by saying one hundred *brachos* daily, he is blessed with all types of blessings.

The Torah lists ninety-eight curses for those who transgress the Torah, and then the Torah adds another two. As it states (*Devarim* 28:61), גַּם כָּל חָלִי וְכָל מַכָּה... יַעֲלֶם ה' אֵלֶיךָ עַד, השַׁמּוֹד, "Even any illness and any blow... Hashem will bring upon you until you are destroyed."

Together, these are one hundred curses. The one hundred *brachos* nullify these one hundred curses.

In ancient *sifrei Torah* there were *tagin* (crowns) over the ק' in (*Devarim* 6:7) וּבְקוּמָךְ, "when you rise." The letter ק' is *gematriya* one hundred, and וּבְקוּמָךְ means "when you rise in the morning." The Baal HaTurim writes, "The *tagin* on the *kuf* in וּבְקוּמָךְ imply that when one awakens in the morning, he should say one hundred *brachos*..."

### Hashem's Name

In every *brachah*, we have the privilege of saying Hashem's name.

Chazal say, "The entire world trembled when Hashem said, לֹא תִשָּׂא (don't say Hashem's Name in vain)." The *Kli Yakar* explains that the world trembled because Hashem created the world with His name. When one says Hashem's Name in vain, he is tampering with the root of the world's existence, which can lead to its destruction.

The *Kli Yakar* writes, "It can be compared to someone who lifts a tree. All the branches move and shake along with the tree. Similarly... since all creation is dependent on Hashem's Name, when one raises [on his lips] Hashem's Name, it is as though he raised all the branches... which are all existence in heaven and earth."<sup>11</sup>

On the other hand, when one says Hashem's Name correctly, this will bring down many *brachos*. The *Bnei Yissaschar zy"a* (*Derech Pikudeicha* 30, *machshavah* 3) writes, "The entire creation, with everything in it, was made with Hashem's name. When one says Hashem's name, he creates a new

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11. He writes that this is the intention of the *passuk*, לֹא תִשָּׂא, "one shouldn't lift," because when one says Hashem's name, it is like he is lifting the entire creation.

For the sin of saying Hashem's name in vain, the Torah says, כִּי לֹא יִקָּח ד', Hashem won't forgive. The *Kli Yakar* explains, "Hakadosh Baruch Hu doesn't forgive sins that are *bein adam lechaveiro* (between man and his fellow). Therefore, this person, who tampered with the holy tree and brought disaster to all the branches, how can Hashem forgive him? Can he go from one end of the world to another to ask for forgiveness? Therefore, Hashem says that He doesn't forgive this sin because it is a sin that cannot be forgiven."

creation, according to the *tefillah* that he says at that time."

The Ibn Ezra (*Shmos* 20:7) writes, "Many people think that someone who says Hashem's name in vain doesn't transgress a grave sin. I will show them that it is worse than all other aveiros that are stated after it [in the *Aseres HaDibros*]. The custom in Mitzrayim, until today, is that if someone swears by the king's head and he doesn't keep his word, he is executed. Even gold will not save him because he has publicly

disgraced the king. If this is how people react to the honor of a human king, it is thousands of times worse when one isn't careful and utters Hashem's name in vain."<sup>12</sup>

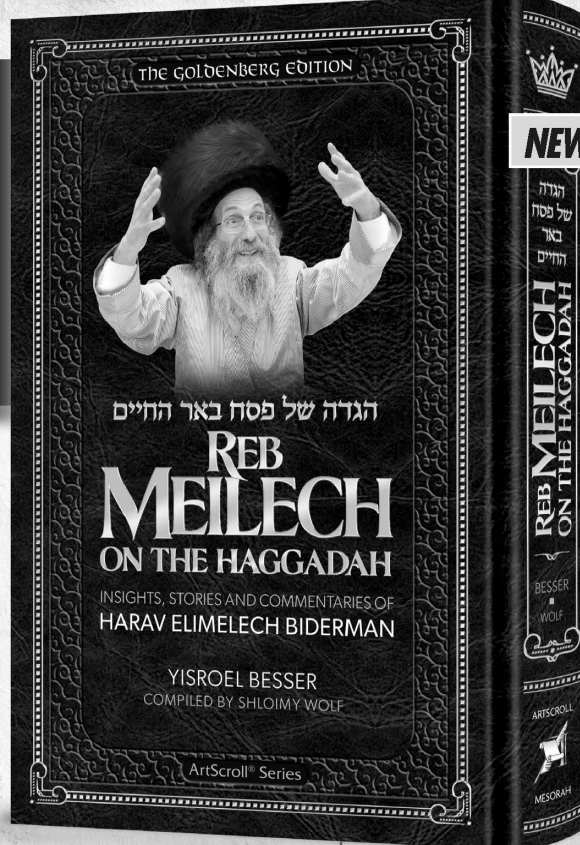
Rashi writes, "[The reward for a good deed] is five hundred times greater than the punishment [for a bad deed]" (*Shmos* 20:6). Therefore, when one says a brachah with Hashem's name and has in mind the proper intentions, he will certainly be rewarded immensely and receive many blessings.

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by YISROEL BESSER

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12. Primarily, the Ibn Ezra refers to swearing falsely using Hashem's name. However, included in the severity of this *aveirah* is also *saying* Hashem's name in vain. As the Rambam writes, "When a person says Hashem's name in vain, this is like swearing in vain" (*Hilchos Brachos* 1:15, see also *Mishnah Berurah* 216:20).