



פרשת ראה

WITH

R' AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"l

BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

Living for Him

Contents:

Part I. Overlaying the Mitzvos - 1

Part II. Overlaying Life - 4

Part III. Underlaying Life - 7

Part I. Overlaying the Mitzvos

The Easy Mitzvah

In this week's *sedrah* the Bnei Yisroel are commanded to fulfill one of the commandments of the Torah, one of the prohibitions that we find quite easy to fulfill. It's the *issur* of **לֹא תֹאכְלֶנּוּ** – *you should not eat the blood of an animal* (Re'eh 12:24). The Torah is warning the Bnei Yisroel that when they *shecht* an animal for eating they should be careful not to consume any of its blood. Instead, **עַל הָאָרֶץ תִּשְׁפְּכֶנּוּ** – *let it pour out of the animal onto the ground*.

Now, with all of our *yetzer horas* – and we have quite a number of them – it never entered our mind to eat blood; we have no appetite for such *aveiros*. And so we're surprised when we read in the next *possuk* that there's going to be a great reward for keeping away from this sin: **לֹא תֹאכְלֶנּוּ** – *Don't eat it*, **לְמַעַן יֵיטֵב לָךְ** – *in order that Hashem should do good to you* (*ibid.*). It means that if you don't eat blood then you'll be *zocheh* to good health and long life and good times – that's all included in 'He will do good for you.'

And not only you; **וּלְבְנֵיךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ** – *your descendants too*. Your children and grandchildren will benefit from your *avodas Hashem*. Which *avodas Hashem*? Not eating blood.

The Easy Reward

Now, that's a puzzle to us because why should you get a reward for not eating blood? Some people can't even look at blood; they faint when they see it. And even if you're from the less faint-hearted, surely you wouldn't think of putting it close to your mouth; if you would taste it, you might even vomit.

So let's picture the scene. A man, let's say, is in the doctor's office and they have there a container of blood, a bag of fresh blood – for our purpose we'll imagine it's the blood of a *beheimah* – and he passes it by on his way into the waiting room. It's nauseating to him and he turns his head away; he gags. Are we going to say that he'll be rewarded? And not only him – his descendants too?! It doesn't make any sense. Why does he deserve any reward at all?

EasyPrint edition sponsor:

Please contact us for sponsorship opportunities.

Call/Text 732.844.3670

For Heaven's Sake!

And so we have to look at a Gemara in Mesichta Makkos and pay careful attention to the words there. It's talking about our *possuk* and it says there like this: דָּם שֶׁנִּפְּשׂוּ שָׁל אָרָם מִתְּעַבְתּוּ - *blood, which a person abhors*, גּוֹרֵם טוֹב לוֹ וּלְבָנָיו - *if he separates from it leshem Shomayim*, גּוֹרֵם טוֹב לוֹ וּלְבָנָיו - *he's going to get a reward for him and his children*.

Those two words – *leshem Shomayim* – that's the key to the answer. Why aren't you quaffing down that blood? Because of the command of Hashem, that's why. Oh! It's *leshem Shomayim*?! Now we're talking! That's already a different story! You're doing it for Hashem, because He commanded so! And if that's the case then גּוֹרֵם טוֹב לוֹ וּלְבָנָיו – you're going to deserve very big rewards.

But actually this answer is not acceptable to us at all. Because it's not true! What kind of a *leshem Shomayim* can a person have if he separates from blood? *Dam* is absolutely nauseating and therefore *Shomayim* or no *Shomayim*, you're not interested. And so the whole story is one big deception. Here this hypocrite is saying, "I am abstaining from blood because of Hashem's command כָּל נֶפֶשׁ מִכֶּם לֹא תֹאכַל דָּם," but actually it's the furthest thing from his mind – he wouldn't be eating the blood anyhow; he's just saying words.

The Valuable Add-On

And the answer is, that's the point. It's what we call *tziruf*, an additional thought, an add-on. Certainly you wouldn't eat blood. It's disgusting. But if in addition to the disgust, you add a little bit of *seichel* and say, "Look, I'm not eating it anyhow, so I might as well add also *leshem Shomayim* too." All you're doing is adding a thin layer of idealism, a little bit of *leshem Shomayim*, but that little addition is worth everything in the Eyes of Hashem.

That's the lesson the Torah is teaching you here. Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants your thoughts – however insignificant you think they are – because when it comes to thoughts nothing is insignificant.

In *Shomayim*, it's the motives that are most important. The intent is the heart of the deed and therefore whatever you do is transformed tremendously by your mind – so much so that even to add a thought, to overlay your action with a small motivation of *leshem Shomayim*, that's everything. And it's deserving of such a big reward that it's not enough for him; *zocheh lo ulevanav* – his descendants will be rewarded too!

The Holy Hypocrite

So we begin to see now that nobody should fear the accusation of hypocrisy when it comes to serving Hashem *leshem Shomayim*. You shouldn't feel 'it's not real', that you're a 'faker', because we see here how much it means just to add on that thought.

And so here's a man sitting down Shabbos at the *seudah* and he says as follows: "I'm sitting down now to eat *leshem Shomayim*, to celebrate that Hashem made the world in six days and then He rested on Shabbos."

So people cringe at that. What *leshem Shomayim*?! You're hungry and there are good things on the table. You can barely hold yourself back, and here you come along, you hypocrite, and you're talking about *leshem Shomayim*. And so the people are looking at you and they're thinking that this man is an example of falsehood, of pious hypocrisy. They take you for a fool.

What they don't realize is that you're the *chochom*. That little bit of thinking, that very thin layer of *leshem Shomayim*, makes you the wise one. There's going to be a very big difference in the World to Come between the honest people who didn't want to be hypocrites and ate only *leshem mitzvas* appetite, and those people who also ate with appetite but they added on an intention of *leshem Shomayim*! Even though it was only a small addition to their actual intention.

Layers of Holiness

Now, you have to know that what you're hearing now, this principle of *tziruf*, opens up for us a

The Other Holiness

panorama of opportunity. Our entire lives become a canvas, a white canvas, upon which we can add on the vibrant colors of *leshem Shomayim* and thereby transform our lives in this world and our place in the World to Come. Everything becomes different.

Not only your life becomes different - you become a different person. There's a statement in the Medrash (Bereishis Rabah 44:1) that לֹא נִתְּנוּ מִצְוֹת אֶלָּא לְצַרְף בְּהֵן אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת - *The commandments were given for the purpose of purifying people*. It's a tremendous statement that should have a resounding impact on our minds. The *mitzvos* were given only to purify us.

Now how does that work? In a number of ways. It says וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֶת כָּל מִצְוֹתַי - *and you should do My commandments*, וְהִייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לְאֱלֹהֵיכֶם - *and you will become holy* (Bamidbar 15:40). Anyone who does a *mitzvah* has to know that the *mitzvah* is bestowing upon him a veneer, a covering, of *kedushah*. When he does another *mitzvah*, he makes it a thicker layer. The more a person lives and performs *mitzvos*, it becomes a more dense layer on him and finally it penetrates beneath the surface and he becomes *kulo kadosh*.

It's like painting wood with a certain kind of lacquer. At first it's only on the surface but after a while it penetrates more and more deeply. The paint is of such a quality that the oils and the pigments can penetrate; and the wood is like a sponge and it draws it in. And after a while it becomes one mass of pigment, of beautiful colors.

And so the *kedushah* on the soul of a Jew at first is a superficial layer. When he does more *mitzvos*, so וְהִייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים, it's another layer and then another one. That's why every time you do a *mitzvah* you say אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו - *He's making us kadosh*." When you wash your hands to eat, you become more *kadosh* because you're doing a *mitzvah*. When you keep Shabbos, it's more *kedushah*. Any *mitzvah* has that effect upon you, and finally you become saturated with *kedushah* through and through.

However, we must know there is another area of *kedushah* which is even *more* important and it's a most neglected area. Actually it's easiest of all things to accomplish and that's why it's such a great loss; it's a *tza'ar gadol, nebach, nebach*, a great pity on mankind that they do not know this secret. And that's the secret of *kavanah leshem Shomayim*. You're expending the efforts anyhow so you might as well do it with the attitude of *leshem Shomayim*! It doesn't cost anything and it's going to transform your act into something entirely different.

What kind of transformation? Listen to the words of the Mesillas Yesharim: He says (Hakdamah) that it's נִמְאָסָה וּמְתוּעָבָה when you do acts without intent *leshem Shomayim*. It's repulsive and abominable! You hear that? נִמְאָסָה וּמְתוּעָבָה!

Now we have to realize that it doesn't mean what you think - there's still a reward even for נִמְאָסָה וּמְתוּעָבָה, absolutely. But compared to what it could have been, it's repulsive. And that's a tragedy. Alas for the multitude of good deeds that are not done with intention, with *kavanas halev*, because thereby a man loses the great reward of serving Hashem in the way that He's looking for.

Let's say you go to *shul*. Of course you come to *shul*. There's no question. And you'll put on a *tallis* - you can't be without a *tallis* in *shul*. You put on *tefillin* too. You can't be without *tefillin*. You can't refuse to stand up by *Shemoneh Esrei*. You do everything! But you're doing it automatically and it's lacking in the inner achievement of *leshem Shomayim*.

Imagine if you would add the thought, "I'm walking to *shul* now in order to serve Hashem." You're going anyhow! So what do you lose? And you gain everything! Everyone else is walking, trudging along out of habit, but you're walking on the clouds. You're a head taller than everyone else because intent is one of the most important ingredients in the nobility of your achievements.

The Holy Miser

How many times do you hand a quarter to a poor man and you do it because you can't refuse; you're embarrassed. You see him coming, so you try to walk around the corner fast. But another one comes from the other side. You're trapped. It's a holdup! You have to give both of them now.

Now imagine what would be if you'd put a little thought into it. You're trapped anyhow so while you're fumbling around in your pocket for two quarters you think, "I'm giving him this coin because אֶלְקֵיכֶם אוֹהֵב עַנְיִים, Hakadosh Baruch Hu loves the poor and I am His emissary to help this man." It's not true – that's not the primary reason; but that little *tziruf* of your mind changes everything. It's an entirely new mitzvah now. You're transforming that deed into something great.

People give tremendous amounts of money for charity, but in very many cases it's done only to please somebody else, not because they are motivated by a desire to serve Hashem. They just can't refuse. You know how much money goes down the drain because of that? Now I say 'down the drain.' Nothing goes down the drain, *chas v'shalom*. הַקְרוֹשׁ בְּרִיָּה בָּרוּךְ הוּא אֵינוֹ מְקַפֵּחַ שְׂכָר כָּל בְּרִיָּה – Hashem doesn't take away reward from anyone. He'll pay that man too. But it's nothing compared to the greatness of taking your money and doing what your own conscience tells you; that's what Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants.

Exploiting the Mines

Now if we start looking at our lives, we see it's a gold mine. Many gold mines of achievement, of wealth! There's no end of opportunities! And therefore it's a pity that life goes by with many such gold mines unutilized and unexploited.

What would you lose if you had done these things with a little bit of *leshem Shomayim* too? Nothing is added in effort and it won't cost you anymore either. And the more you practice it, the more it seeps down into your *neshamah*. It starts off as superficial thoughts, superficial words, but just like the *kedushah* of the *maaseh mitzvah* itself, the

kavanah leshelem Shomayim penetrates through and through.

Part II. Overlaying Life

The Invisible Chapter

In Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim there's a whole *siman*, an entire chapter, devoted to this one subject (§231). It's remarkable how many people don't even know there is such a chapter. It's a *siman* titled שְׂכָר שְׂמִימִים בְּנוֹנוֹתָיו יְהִיוּ לְשֵׁם שְׂמִימִים – 'that whatever you do should be *leshem Shomayim*.' Kol means everything – your eating, your sleeping, your work in the office or the kitchen.

Now, one of the reasons this chapter is ignored by so many people is because it seems to be impossible. *Leshem Shomayim*?! And it should be *kol*? *Everything* we do?! Forget about it then. That's for very big people, we think; for *tzaddikim*. Maybe one day, after I retire, when I have time to dedicate myself fully to *avodas Hashem*, maybe then.

But we're learning now that that's all wrong because what Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants – at the bare minimum – is *tziruf*; He wants that thought that you're adding on. If you're eating, nobody is asking you to do anything different – nobody is asking you to eat less, although it's not a bad idea many times – but even if you don't change a thing, what He wants from you is that you should add the thought *leshem Shomayim*.

And it's so easy because you already did the hard work. You paid good money for kosher food – *glatt kosher* surely costs more. And you're making *brachos* before and after. No question that you do a lot of things to eat according to *halachah*. So what will you add in expense if you add one thought: "I am eating in order to serve Hashem"? What do you lose by thinking that thought?

Eleven Important Words

And so when you sit down to a table of good food and you're full of appetite and you say, "I'm

going to eat *leshem Shomayim* in order I should be able to have *koach* to serve you Hashem”, don’t think it’s hypocrisy. It’s just being smart. That’s what Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants. “I’m eating לְהַבְרֹת אֶת הַגּוּף, to make the body healthy, כְּדֵי שְׂאוּכַל לְעַבְד אֶת הַשֵּׁם.” Memorize those words. Once more: “כְּדֵי לְהַבְרֹת אֶת הַגּוּף כְּדֵי שְׂאוּכַל לְעַבְד אֶת הַשֵּׁם”

Now your wife shouldn’t hear it. She’ll laugh at you. “You’re a faker”, she’ll say. Unless she comes here to these lectures. If she’s here in the women’s section so you’re a lucky fellow. But let’s say she’s home taking care of the children and she doesn’t listen to the tapes either. So you’ll have to wait till she walks out of the dining room. When she walks out to go to the kitchen to get something, you should say it. And if you can’t shake her off for a minute – she’s there with you in the dining room – so say it quietly under your palm, “I’m eating this piece of chicken now, this browned potato, in order to have the strength, the health, to serve Hashem”. And don’t worry about your hearty appetite. Say it anyhow.

Enjoy It

I once spoke about this and there was a *tzaddik*, a young man, who tried to do it. So he never chewed his food. “How can I eat for the sake of Heaven if I enjoy it?” he said. “So I’ll swallow whole pieces without chewing it so I won’t enjoy it. Then it’ll be *leshem Shomayim*”

Until finally he became ill and the doctor told him to stop. Do you know why he became sick? He was being punished. You think Hashem wants you to swallow food without enjoying it, in order to eat *leshem Shomayim*?

Leshem Shomayim means you could sink your teeth into that food and enjoy it. *V’achalta!* Let the saliva run. Let the stomach juices run. Enjoy it. *V’savata!* Go to town! But while you’re enjoying it, add the intent that you’re doing it to be healthy in order to serve Hashem!

Bedtime Stories

When you’re about to go to sleep, what can you lose if you add the thought, “I am doing this now in

order to be healthy and to get up tomorrow morning and serve Hakadosh Baruch Hu with a rested body and mind”? And even though it’s not true – you’re going to sleep because sleep is fun! You’re falling off your feet and *leshem Shomayim* or not you can’t wait to put your head on the pillow. Say it anyhow! Add on the intention of *leshem Shomayim*.

You know sleep is one of the biggest benefits that we enjoy in our lives. Sweet sleep is more important than medicines because at nighttime your worn out nerves become mended. Everything in the body is restored by sleep. And therefore, why should you sleep like a cat sleeps or like a gentile sleeps? By means of adding one little thought before you drift off into slumber land, your entire sleep is transformed. You are healing yourself for Hakadosh Baruch Hu now.

Walks, Work and Welfare

Not only sleep. The Chida in one of his *seforim* says if you like to take walks so why shouldn’t you think when you’re beginning your walk that you’re doing it for *avodas Hashem*. You’re exercising or maybe you want to pick up your spirits or think about the *niflaos haBorei*. Whatever it is, add that thought.

When you go to work, if you have children, so you’re bringing up children *bederech haTorah*. You have to pay *sechar limud* in *yeshivos* and *Bais Yaakov*. It costs money to run a Jewish home. Certainly you can think these thoughts. Why shouldn’t you? Don’t just think of your career, of putting money in the bank. Even if you put money in the bank, overlay those deposits with *leshem Shomayim*. Someday your daughter will want a *ben Torah*. It costs money to support a son-in-law who learns. It costs money if you want to go to the *kollel* in your later years in life. It’s a good idea by the way; some people do that. Whatever it is, you’ll need money for some good purpose so do it *leshem Shomayim*.

IRS Fraud

Otherwise, you’re slaving away for nothing – it’s נְמָאָסָת וּמְתוּעָבָת. Especially today when you’re working

mostly for the government. The IRS is taking away a quarter of your income – more than that – which means that of the twelve months in the year, you're working three months, maybe four months, for the government, for government programs.

It means that your money goes to support other people who don't work. The silliest thing is welfare. What does welfare spending mean? It means you're inviting all the poor to the big cities. Welfare is an incentive for them to come and settle in your cities where they can loaf all day. So they come and now the politicians want their votes which means that we'll have to pay even more taxes so these people can loaf and live on welfare checks. All these 'kind hearted' things that the liberals are doing to encourage criminals, they're doing it with money they take out of our pocket.

And so a factory worker who doesn't think, that's what he's doing; he's working for the loafers, for the liberals, for the wicked politicians. When a father slaves all week in the factory or in his office, and he doesn't think at all, he's practically wasting his life. *leshem*

But now you want to transform your life into *avodas Hashem*; how can you do it? The answer is what we're talking about now. Practice up on adding some *leshem Shomayim*! If only he would add a little bit of thought, "I'm doing this in order to raise up a generation of *shomrei Torah*". And let him think about it as frequently as he can. When he opens up the office or the store in the morning he thinks that. And then a couple of times during the day to refresh his memory.

Dumb Dentists

I once spoke to a dentist about that. I said, "You're helping mankind. Think about that a few times during the day. You're serving the Almighty," I told him. "רופא כל בָּשָׂר – He heals all flesh, and you're serving Him by healing people. You're an emissary of Hashem!"

You know what that dentist could have accomplished with a little bit of thinking?! He would have become a true *oved Hashem*.

But he looked at me with such intelligence like this wall looks at me. I tried it again at other visits but nothing went in. At least I tried.

Everything Stays the Same but...

Do you have to change what you're doing? No. No change. You go through all the motions of your workday; you're busy in the office or maybe you're laying down carpet or painting or installing pipes. Whatever it is, you're trying to make some profit. But you're adding some thought to it. That's the best profit.

When a mother feeds her child, if she does it like the lady next door does it – Mrs. Dominick also feeds her child, Mrs. Levitino also feeds her child with compassion – so if Mrs. Levine and Mrs. Cohen also do the same, so what is their greatness?

That's why *tziruf* is so important! When a Jewish woman will feed the child because she is an emissary of the One Who is *פֹּתַח אֶת יָדוֹ וּמְשַׂבֵּיעַ לְכֹל חַי רִצּוֹן* – He opens up His Hand and He satiates all the living; a mother opens up her hand and she feels that her hand is the Hand of Hashem, you know what that means? She has taken a simple act that everybody does and she has elevated it into one of the great forms of service of Hakadosh Baruch Hu!

Everything is Different

Everything in life is different. Everything becomes noble. Otherwise we're just machines. We're just cogs in a machine. Like the gentiles all over the world are working and supporting children and feeding them and marrying them off – Italians also want *nachas* from children; Italians also feed their children. But when the Jew does it not because of selfish motives – now you can't help being selfish but if in addition to the selfish motive if you're able to add one more thought, "I'm doing it for Hashem too," so all of your deeds are transformed by that intent! The intent is the heart of the deed!

We're not telling you to refrain from doing things. Yes, sometimes you have to stop doing certain things – sometimes you cannot do certain things if you want *leshem Shomayim* – but in general almost everything that we do anyhow, we can make great.

It doesn't mean you can't enjoy life! Enjoy! You can be happy! You can make a lot of money! Nothing wrong! Where do you find in the Gemara any place that it's wrong to make money, it's wrong to be rich, it's wrong to be happy? It's a fundamental error to think it's wrong. A man can marry a pretty wife. He doesn't have to take the ugliest wife he can find and say, "I'm marrying only *leshem Shomayim*." It's a big mistake people make in *pshat*. You can marry a pretty girl. You can make money. You can eat a big lunch and fall asleep on a comfortable pillow. Why not? Only that you should add some intent. While you're doing it, you shouldn't waste your life. You add the intent *leshem Shomayim*.

Fake it till You Make it

So you say, "Well, he's a faker. He's not doing it for *Shomayim*! He wants to make money. He wants to eat a good lunch. He likes making money. He likes to nap". No! That's a mistake! It's a big mistake! That's what we're saying now. You can add an intent even though it's not your sole intent.

It's not hypocritical. Hakadosh Baruch Hu doesn't expect you to give up your livelihood, your good life, but while you're busy living that life, why not add the intention of doing it for some noble purpose, for the service of Hashem. And that's how everything you do becomes ennobled; it becomes sublime and your life is packed with accomplishment. You can change all the copper of your life into gold just by the alchemy of adding this thought, "I am doing it *leshem Shomayim*".

Part III. Underlying Life

Shomayim Who?

Now, there's another piece of this subject that must be included when we talk about *leshem*

Shomayim, and it's something that is often overlooked. And that is *Shomayim*! You have to believe in *Shomayim*; you have to know there's a Hashem *ba'Shomayim* if you want to do things *leshem Shomayim*.

And that brings us to the Chovos Halevavos on this subject. The Chovos Halevavos, as you know, is one of the chief textbooks in *avodas Hashem*. You don't need my saying it. It's well-known that the Chasam Sofer, *zichrono levrachah*, before every *shiur* that he gave – he gave a daily *shiur* – he said a *shiur* in Chovos Halevavos. Every day! Because what he says in that sefer, that's the manual for successful Torah living.

Now, the Chovos Halevavos consists of ten *shearim*, ten main subjects – each subject has a number of chapters but there are ten main *shearim*. And if this great guide that the Jewish nation has followed for almost a thousand years, if he divides the subject into ten main divisions so we understand that each one is of the utmost importance. It's not a minor manner that comes under some other heading; if it's one of these ten subjects then it's one of the most important of all subjects.

And one of these ten subjects is called *Sha'ar Yichud Hama'aseh* – the Gate of Single-Minded Devotion; about living our lives, as much as possible, *leshem Shomayim*. Now, when the Chovos Halevavos speaks about *Yichud Hama'aseh*, we have to know he means much more than what you heard from me tonight. Everything that was said by me is included in his words and he says much more too. He says it better too.

A Strong Conviction

But in addition there's something there, a new area that the Chovos Halevavos includes under the heading of *leshem Shomayim* that we ourselves wouldn't have thought of. It wouldn't have even entered our minds to include it under this heading.

What is it? He explains that included in *leshem Shomayim* is that when we do the service of Hashem it's important for us to do it with conviction – *with*

conviction that there is a Hashem ba'Shomayim. You hear that word? Conviction! We have to be convinced that everything we are working for is actually true, that it's absolutely so. We shouldn't have any *sefeikos*, any doubts at all.

And he spends a good deal of time on this subject of *emunah*; he dilates there on all forms of *yetzer hora*, all the *sefeikos* in the *emunah* that a person might have. He says for example that the *yetzer hora* is going to try to persuade you that there is no afterlife and he says that you must therefore spend time reinforcing your belief in Olam Haba. And he brings in also the importance of believing that Hashem is One, what it means *Hashem Echad*. And included in that, to know that Hashem exists and that He is in control. All the principles of *emunah* he speaks about.

Misplaced Emunah

Now we don't understand that. How does that come into *Sha'ar Yichud Hama'aseh*? We're not talking now about *emunah*. We're talking about serving Hashem *leshem Shomayim*. *Emunah* is very good, excellent. But it belongs in some other section, we think. And yet, right here, in this section, the Chovos Halevavos parades before our eyes all of the *yesodos* of *emunah* one by one.

He says, for example, if the *yetzer hora* will try to persuade you that there's no afterlife, or that this world is what's important, so he tells you what you should think about it and how you answer it. And he warns us not to ignore the *yetzer hora*. He says it's like a snake that bites a man *chalilah*. You can't ignore that bite because the poison is going to spread, even though you want to ignore it.

And therefore if the *yetzer hora* gives you a bite – and he's biting all of us – it's not enough to say 'I don't want to think about these things'. It's not enough because even if you do ignore it and you keep doing – you fulfill everything – but it's a *chisaron*; it's a lack of *leshem Shomayim*. And that's a poison that spreads – it infiltrates into everything you do. Because when a person is eating *leshem*

Shomayim or working *leshem Shomayim* are even putting on *tefillin leschem Shomayim* but he has doubts, so what kind of a *leshem Shomayim* is there? Of course it's something but it's missing the foundation.

Layering Convictions

And therefore just like we want to add on layers of *leshem Shomayim* over everything we do, it's just as important that there should be an underlayer, an underpinning of *emunah* that is supporting everything you do. You have to serve Hashem with a full conviction! That's the rock bottom, the substrate, of everything.

And because today the whole world is full of *apikorsus*, this underpinning of *leshem Shomayim* is especially important for us. You'd be surprised who has these *sefeikos* inside of him. People have spoken to me. Outside he looks like a *tzaddik gamur* but I see that he's empty. He doesn't have any conviction. He's thinking maybe this is true, or maybe that. Christianity, evolution, other things. Could be he does things *leshem Shomayim*, but he has no conviction in *Shomayim*.

Funny gods and Funny Theories

The truth is that anybody who knows a little bit knows that it's *kulo sheker*. We should be convinced enough that we laugh at all of the ideals of the *umos haolam*. At least as smart as Montezuma we should be. Montezuma was an Aztec Emperor. There's a story that when the Conquistadors came to the Aztecs and they wanted to convert the Emperor so he said, "Tell me about your god". And he listened intently to the whole story. Finally they came to the end and they told him how he was crucified. Montezuma smiled at that. "You mean he died?" He laughed. What kind of business are you offering me? A god who was born from a woman and then finally he died too? He laughed.

And evolution? That's even a bigger laugh. Here is what one of their authorities said: The probability that life could arise from non-life is the probability, not one chance in 10 to the 450th power. Now, if you

know mathematics, 10 to the 450th power is such a big number that it is impossible to record it. All the letters in all of the books in all the libraries are not enough. Not only that, but all the atoms in the universe are not as big as that! That big of a number! There are not enough atoms in the universe to fill that number. So it means the chances that life should arise from non-life are so slim that the probability is absolutely zero. That's all they can say.

So, how is it possible that people can have any kind of *safeik* about such a stupid idea that life happened by accident?

Who's the Apikores?

The answer is we have to fortify ourselves. Everyone has to convince himself; to be rock solid in his convictions. That's what the *Chachamim* said, **עך מיה שתשיב לאפיקורס** – you have to know what to answer the *apikores*.

I once heard from my *rosh yeshivah* when I was in Slabodka in Europe. He said it doesn't mean you go and talk to *that apikores*. Talk to *this apikores*, the one inside of you. "Know what to answer the *apikores* inside of you." And there's plenty to answer.

The Chovos Halevavos himself gives us a great deal of material about that. If you're capable you should read it inside. Or you can come to these lectures if you want. I'm not saying only mine; there are other places too. Whatever it is, when people start on the quest of fortifying their hearts, they'll surely succeed because *haba letaher mesayin lo*; if you have good intentions, Hakadosh Baruch Hu will help you succeed.

If people are interested in learning these things, they can find many *tanna d'mesaya lei* to support the *emunah*. You don't have to go to the books. From nature! Just with your own eyes it's amazing what you can see that will convince you of a Borei.

Watermelon Seeds and Gehenom

Not only that. With your own eyes you can see so much plan and purpose that it makes you become convinced that there's a world after this life. I always

say that you can prove the World to Come from a watermelon seed.

If there's so much plan and purpose, such infinite plan and purpose just in a watermelon seed, so how you can say the whole world is chaotic and purposeless? The watermelon seed says that it's impossible. Certainly everything in the world is perfectly planned. So what kind of perfect planning is there if a Hitler can murder six million innocents for nothing just out of plain wickedness, devilry? And then when he sees that the Allies are beginning to close in on him so he takes a perfumed poison and he floats off out of this world and escapes punishment? Is that a Plan? Is that a Design? Can't the One Who made an apple seed make a better Plan for this world than that?

The answer is certainly. There's a beautiful Plan here. And therefore, there's no question that Hitler is burning in Gehenom for now and until forever. And if anybody will have the slightest doubt of that, he is contradicting all the purposefulness of creation, all the wisdom that we see in the world. It's axiomatic that in a wise and purposeful world the wicked will not get away just by dying from the retribution that they deserve for their misdeeds. If everything is so perfectly Planned and so perfectly Designed then it's absolutely clear that there's *sechar v'onesh* – that all accounts will be settled to the utmost perfection.

Layering Inside and Out

And therefore that's part of the great job of *shleimus halev* – fortifying the *emunah* in all of the Torah principles! And on this the Chovos Halevavos spends almost the entire section. Ah! That's a new aspect of *kavanah lesheim Shamayim*. Not only the things we spoke about before about adding the thought of *lesheim Shomayim* but to be convinced about *Shomayim*; to be convinced of the *emunah*.

That's the great program for the life of a *frum* Jew. Whatever he's doing, he's always adding on a layer of *lesheim Shomayim*. No matter what – even if it's the thinnest layer, like the *lesheim Shomayim* of the one who won't eat blood, that's what Hakadosh

Baruch Hu wants. And as much as he practices living with this important principle, more and more, so the layer of *leshem Shomayim* gets thicker and thicker; it penetrates downwards too. It becomes more and more real, more and more true.

And at the same time he's building up the foundation of *leshem Shomayim*, he's strengthening the underpinning of all of his *avodah* by means of strengthening all of the *yesodei emunah*.

And that's why when we turn to the very end of that great section of *Yichud Hama'aseh* we hear his parting admonition and description of the pinnacle of success: *על בן*, he says, *בְּכֹל*, *אֶתְּהָ צְרִיךְ לְהַשְׁמֵר מֵהֶם בְּכֹל*, *יְכַלְתֶּךָ* – you have to be careful to fulfill with all of your abilities all of the things that I told you until now. And what's going to be the result of that? *אוֹלַי יִהְיֶה מַעֲשֵׂיךָ* *שְׁלֹם לְאַלְקִים וּמִיָּחָד לְשִׁמּוֹ* – maybe you'll succeed that one day your deeds will be entirely devoted to Hashem, *וְיִהְיֶה רְצוֹנִי וּמִקְבָּל אֶצֶל הַבּוֹרָא קְבוּל טוֹב* – and it will be accepted by Hakadosh Baruch Hu with a favorable acceptance. And you'll be *zocheh* to the promise in this week's *parshah*: *לְמַעַן יִיטֵב לְךָ* – in order that Hashem should be good to you, *וּלְבָנֶיךָ אַחֲרָיֶךָ* – and to your descendants after you.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos

LET'S GET PRACTICAL

Five Layers a Day

Because my day is filled with opportunities to add *kavanah leshem Shomayim* I will *bli neder* make sure every day to find five different activities that I am doing anyhow and I will say with my mouth, "I am doing this *leshem Shomayim*". And I will add as many details as possible in order to make it genuine. Even if it feels fake and hypocritical I will continue to do it until it begins to sink into my conscience.

This week's booklet is based on tapes:

70 - Intent | 445 - With All Your Heart | E-230 - The Artificial Man
E-235 - Diamonds on the Road

Listen: 718.289.0899 Press 1 for English and 2 for Thursday Night Lectures



When a *rasha* is dying and suffering, is that an atonement for him so that he should suffer less in the Next World?



It could be. If he would utilize the opportunity to do some *teshuvah*, then of course it would be a *kaparah* for him. But if he remains an atheist then nothing will help. He could be suffering the worst forms of torture but if he has no G-d then there is no atonement for him at all. There's no such thing as atonement for a person who doesn't believe in Hashem.

Now, if somebody would come to the hospital and teach him *emunah*, teach him about Hakadosh Baruch Hu, then he can utilize his last moments. But without that ingredient, without Hashem, there's no such thing as *teshuvah*. *Teshuvah* means to come back to Hashem, not to come back to morality. It's not enough to come back to decency; that's not *teshuvah* – you have to come back to Hashem otherwise it's worthless. And don't let anybody tell you anything different because it's *sheker v'chazav*; it's totally false.

That's why the greatest of all errors is to forget about Hakadosh Baruch Hu. That's the sin of all sins. And therefore, the biggest benefit you can do to people is to teach them *emunah*. *Emunah* is the ingredient that makes a man's life worth living, and it even makes his suffering worth enduring. Because he can utilize his suffering and accomplish coming back to Hashem. That's the success of *yissurim*, of suffering. But just to suffer and remain an atheist, that's nothing at all. If he doesn't say, "I've sinned before You Hashem. I've been a wicked man and I've committed many abominations. Please forgive me," then his suffering is nothing. It's just the beginning of the real suffering that's waiting for him in Gehenom.

TAPE # 606