

במחשבות

The Way of Emunah

Collected Thoughts
on the Weekly Parshah

From

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Rosenbaum shlita**

Vayakhel

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Parshas Vayakhel



The Voice of Torah and the Voice of Tefillah/Even Gashmius Should be L’Kavod Shabbos/Wealth in the Merit of Shabbos/Recognition that Shabbos is Beginning/Keeping Shabbos All Year/Observing Mitzvos Because Hashem Commanded Us To/No Influence From the Yeitzer Hara/The Greatness of a Baal Teshuva/A Wife is a Man’s Revelation/Hishtadlus to Receive Divine Light/The Tikkun in Our Times is Through Emunah/Serving Hashem With Passion/Wealth From Selling Lumber

Parshas Para

The Connection Between Torah and Para Adumah/Knowing that One Doesn’t Know/Knowing that One Cannot Accomplish Anything/Unquestioning Emunah/Teshuva Purifies the Hearts of Tzadikim

שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי יִהְיֶה לָּךְ קָדֵשׁ וּגּו' (לה ב)

For six days you shall do all your work and the seventh day shall be holy for you...
(35:2)

The Voice of Torah and the Voice of Tefillah:

Sefer Imrei Noam explains this *pasuk* by quoting the Alshich Hakadosh (Eicha 1:7), who relates a parable of a man who committed several crimes against the king. However, the king did not want to punish him because this individual was a talented musician who knew how to play beautiful music. Since the king enjoyed his music very much, he didn't want to have him put to death, even though he was liable to receive the death penalty according to the letter of the law. One of this man's enemies had an idea. He decided to cut off the man's right hand so that he would no longer be able to play any musical instrument, knowing that the king would now have no reason

to keep him alive.

The *nimshol* is that if a **person uses his voice to sing the sweet song of Torah and tefillah, Hashem will forgive his sins because He wants to continue hearing this song.** The *yeitzer hara*, however, tries to do what it can to stop the person from learning Torah and davening so that Hashem would no longer derive this pleasure and the person would then be punished.

The Imrei Noam writes that the words "*kol adas bnei Yisroel*" have the same *gematriah* as the words "*Torah tefillah*". It says that Hashem commanded us to do these "*devarim*". The word "*devarim*" can mean "words", which indicates that the main thing we are commanded to do is to say words of Torah and

tefillah.

The *pasuk* goes on to say that we should “do work for six days”. Chazal say (Brachos 30B) that the early *chasidim* would wait an hour before davening and an hour after davening. The Gemara asks when they had time to do their work, and answers that their work was done by others in the merit of their *tefillos*.

Accordingly, after Hashem spoke about the power of Torah and *tefillah*, He says that even during the six days of the week, when we are commanded to work, we should make sure to engage in Torah and *tefillah* and, if we do this, our work will be done by others.

Even Gashmius Should be L’Kavod Shabbos:

The Chida (Sefer Nachal

Kedumim) notes that the *pasuk* says that the seventh day shall be holy “*lachem*”, for you. He writes that the *pasuk* is saying that the “*lachem*”, the part of the day that is for your enjoyment, such as eating and dressing nicely on Shabbos, must be “*l’kavod Shabbos*”, for the honor of Shabbos.

Wealth in the Merit of Shabbos:

A Polish Jew once came to the Yismach Yisroel of Alexander *zy”a* and related that although he owned a store, he had very few customers and he was unable to make a sufficient livelihood. From the course of the conversation, the Rebbe was able to discern that the man’s store was open on Shabbos.

The Yismach Moshe told him, “I can guarantee you success in your business on one condition.

You must take me as a 15% partner without me having to invest one dollar into the business. If you accept these terms, I promise you success.”

Of course, the man agreed to the deal, and a contract was written up.

The Yismach Moshe then told him, “Since I now own one-seventh of your store and I am entitled to one-seventh of the profits, I choose to take Shabbos as my day. All the profits you earn on Shabbos will be mine, while the profits from the other six days will be yours. Therefore, I ask you to close the store on Shabbos.”

The man understood what the Rebbe was saying. From then on, he closed his store on Shabbos and he saw much financial success.

Recognition that Shabbos is Beginning:

The Chidushei Harim zy”a had a custom to light his pipe every erev Shabbos a few minutes before the time of *hadlakas neiros*. He would then smoke until it was time to light the candles, when he would extinguish his pipe.

He once explained why he does this by saying, “Every Jew is *mekabel Shabbos* on *erev Shabbos*. A worker puts down his tools and a storeowner closes his shop. But what do I do? I don’t have a store or work with tools, so how do I show that I am being *mekabel Shabbos*? Therefore, I start to smoke and I put out my pipe as a sign that I recognize that Shabbos is starting and I am accepting the sanctity of Shabbos.”

Keeping Shabbos All

Year:

A simple villager once came to the Sar Shalom of Belz zy”a and asked for a *bracha*. The Rebbe asked him, “Do you daven every day? Are you careful with kashrus and *shemiras* Shabbos?”

The villager replied, “I try very hard to do my best. However, I am forced to admit that I cannot keep Shabbos. I have to work in the fields every day and I cannot take a day off.”

The Rebbe chastised him and explained the importance of maintaining the sanctity of Shabbos. The villager thought for a minute and then said, “Rebbi, I am ready to accept to keep every Shabbos of the year except for during the harvesting season. During that season, it is too hard for me to take time off from my work.”

In response, the Rebbe told him a story:

There once was Poritz who made a party for all of the other landowners in the area. Once they were all drunk, they began to talk about the Jews. Each Poritz praised their “Moishke” – which is what they called the Jewish manager they appointed to oversee their lands – and claimed that theirs was the smartest and most reliable. Finally, the host of the party declared, “My Jew is the most loyal of all! He would do anything I ask of him without complaint!”

One of the guests asked, “Would he even agree to become a Christian if you asked him to do so?”

The Poritz answered, “Definitely!”

He immediately called for his land manager and said, “Moishke, are you loyal to me?”

“Of course,” the Jew answered.

“I would readily obey any Jew again.”
request you make of me.”

“If so,” the Poritz said, “I order you to renounce Judaism and to accept our faith!”

The Jew began to frantically think of a reply, but he couldn't come up with anything to get himself out of this mess. In his panic, he blurted out, “Okay”, and he accepted to become a Christian.

A few days later, the Poritz called for him and said, “Moishke, I know that you really don't want to give up your Judaism. Therefore, I have good news for you. I give you permission to go back to being a

The Jew ran home and joyfully told his wife that he had been granted permission to convert back to Judaism. However, his wife was not as happy as him. She asked, “Did you fall on your head? Pesach is around the corner. I have no strength for all of the cooking and cleaning and we don't have enough money for the matzohs, wine, and meat. Go back to the Poritz and ask if we can remain Christians until after Pesach is over.”

The villager got the message and understood that he had to keep every Shabbos according to halacha.

וְכָל חָכָם לֵב וְגו' יִבְאוּ וַיַּעֲשׂוּ אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה ה' (לה, י)

And everyone who was wise of heart...brought. And they did all that Hashem commanded. (35:10)

**Observing Mitzvos
Because Hashem
Commanded Us To:**

zy"ra explains that the smartest thing a person can do is to obey Hashem's will simply because

The Baal Shem Tov Hakadosh

that is what He commanded,

without trying to understand everything on his own. Accordingly, the *pasuk* is saying that “everyone who is wise” showed their wisdom by “doing all that Hashem commanded”,

meaning that they obeyed Hashem unquestioningly and did what He commanded simple because that is what He commanded them to do.

וַיָּבֹאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים עַל הַנָּשִׁים כָּל נְדִיב לֵב וְגו' (לה, כב)

The men came with the women; every generous hearted person... (35:22)

No Influence From the Yeitzer Hara:

The Medrash states (Shemos Rabbah 12:16): “All of Yisroel rejoiced with the work on the Mishkan and every donation was brought with joy and enthusiasm. It says that the men came with the women. They pushed each other to come and they came in a mixture.”

This is written as a praise of Klal Yisroel. They wanted to donate to Hashem’s house and did so with joy, to such an extent that the *yeitzer hara* had no influence over them and they were able to come in a mixture

of men and women without coming to sin.

The Greatness of a Baal Teshuva:

The Sefas Emes *zy”a* quotes his grandfather, the Chidushei Harim *zy”a*, as explaining this *pasuk* by quoting the words of Chazal (Sanhedrin 99A): “In the place where *baalei teshuva* stand, complete *tzadikim* cannot stand.” With this in mind, he explains that the men had committed the sin of the *eigel hazahav*, but they had now repented. The women, on the

other hand, had never sinned. This is why the words of the *pasuk* literally mean that the men were “on the women”, meaning that they were superior to them, because they were *baalei teshuva*.

He explains why *baalei teshuva* are superior to complete *tzadikim* by saying that someone who has committed a sin remembers the great desire he had to do the *aveirah* and he channels this passion to use it to serve Hashem. Only *baalei teshuva* have this level of enthusiasm in their *avodas Hashem*. *Tzadikim* who have never sinned do not have the same fire because they never felt a fiery passion to sin.

A Wife is a Man’s Revelation:

Sefer Ach Pri Tevuah writes that it seems that there are times

when a man wants to do a mitzvah but his wife obstructs him. In truth, however, he is the one stopping himself. The reason he isn’t doing the mitzvah is because he doesn’t really want to do it, and that is why his wife stands in his way.

In other words, what a man feels internally, his feelings that are hidden within him, his wife expresses to him in a revealed way.

He quotes the Meor Einayim as saying that this was the intent of the *malachim* that visited Avrohom Avinu and asked, “Where is Sarah your wife?”

The angels wanted to determine Avrohom’s spiritual level. Therefore, they asked how his wife was doing, as the way she acted externally would display Avrohom’s internal nature.

Accordingly, the *pasuk* is

saying that all of Klal Yisroel donated to the Mishkan with full hearts, which explains why no women protested. Thus, the verse says that the men came with the women, meaning that they all were in agreeance because the donations were so genuine.

In a similar vein, I once heard from my grandfather, the Kretchnifer Rebbe zy”a, that the father of a family is akin to a “closed book”, as it is very difficult to determine where he is holding spiritually. The “*pirush*” – the explanation of this book – is the way his children behave. From the way the children act, one can determine how they were raised and educated, which shows us what type of person the father truly is. This *pasuk* teaches

us that a man’s wife is also a “*pirush*”, as her conduct displays what her husband is like internally.

In a similar vein, the Satmar Rov zy”a said an explanation on the verse (Shemos 15:23): “And they could not drink the waters of Marah because they were bitter. Therefore, the place was named ‘Marah’ (bitter).” He explained that the *pasuk* can be read as saying that the men were bitter. They wanted to obey the Torah and serve Hashem properly but their wives obstructed them and made it difficult for them. They were bitter because they claimed that it was their wives’ fault but the truth was that they themselves were to blame.

רְאוּ קָרָא ה' בְּשֵׁם בְּצִלְאֵל בֶּן אֲוִרִי בֶן חוּר לְמֹשֶׁה יְהוּדָה (לה, ל)

See, Hashem has called by name Betzalel, the son of Uri, the son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehuda (35:30)

Hishtadlus to Receive Divine Light:

Sefer Yesod Ha'avodah writes that this *pasuk* hints to for a person to merit being influenced by the Divine light he must first do his *hishtadlus*, rather than waiting for the light to come to him. The *pasuk* can be read as saying: “Ben Uri” – how does one merit receiving the Divine light (*ohr*)? By being a “ben Chur”. The word “*chur*” can mean a small hole. This can be seen as a reference to the words of Chazal (Shir Hashirim Rabbah 5:3) that if one “opens an opening the size of a needle’s eye, Hashem will open for him an opening the size of a huge hall.” Thus, the *pasuk* is saying that one needs to do a small *hishtadlus*, and he will then receive Divine assistance.

The Tikkun in Our Times

is Through Emunah:

Sefer Ohr L'Shomayim (Parshas Bo) writes that when a person uplifts himself spiritually, he must also try to uplift others along with him. He says that in previous generations, the way to rectify one’s soul was through bodily afflictions, which destroyed the *klipos* that harm the *neshamas*. In our times, however, **it is much easier to fix one’s soul. Afflictions are unnecessary and one only needs to have *emunah* in Hashem.**

He uses this concept to explain the *pasuk* (Shemos 13:4): “You are going out today.” This means that our *neshamas* are going away from the *klipos* that negatively affect them and are returning to their pristine state. “In the month of the spring” – this is a hint that we will return to our natural, pure state, and we will be spiritually uplifted.

Serving Hashem With Passion:

The Toldos Yaakov Yosef (Sefer Poras Yosef) writes the following *moshol* in the name of the Baal Shem Tov:

There once was a man who did an apprenticeship by a goldsmith. He learned the entire trade and wanted to start working on his own. Before he left, the goldsmith wrote him a list of what he needed to do in his work but he forgot to write down to heat up the anvil with lit coals at the beginning of the job. The goldsmith thought it was obvious that the anvil needed to be made hot with fire and there was no need to remind his student of that.

However, the student erred and he thought that everything could be done without fire. He went to the king's palace and got a job there. He toiled all day but

got nothing done, until he was fired from the job. He then went back to his teacher and complained that he never instructed him to put a fire to the anvil before starting to work.

His mentor told him, "You are a fool! Don't you know that the fire is the main thing? Without it you can't start the work. I didn't need to write that at all because it is so obvious."

It is the same with the work of serving Hashem. **Without fire and passions, it is impossible to begin, and one can toil all day and not succeed.**

He uses this idea to explain the *pasuk* (Shir Hashirim 1:11): "We will make you rows of gold with sparks of silver." The "gold" refers to the Torah and mitzvos, which, of course, are needed to serve Hashem. However, the main thing is the "sparks of silver", the fiery embers that one

needs to light the fire of serving Him with passion and love.

The Baal Hatanya zy”a had a *chasid* named Rav Shmuel Minkes. Rav Shmuel was once traveling to be with the Rebbe in Liazhna. It was a cold winter day, and there was a lot of snow on the ground. A wagon passed by and the driver offered him a ride, which he gladly accepted.

When Rav Shmuel climbed onto the wagon, he saw that the driver had several large bottles of whiskey. He asked if he could drink a bit of whiskey to help him warm up and the driver was

happy to give him some. He took a drink and greatly enjoyed it.

When Rav Shmuel reached Liazhna, he told the Baal Hatanya that he had learned a *chiddush* in *avodas Hashem*. He said, “I learn that it is possible to sit in a wagon that is full of whiskey but that won’t help at all to warm you up. You only will feel warm after you drink a little bit of it and put some whiskey into yourself. So too, one can spend a lot of time serving Hashem but it won’t help him unless he adds a little warmth into himself.”

וְאֵת הַקֶּרָשִׁים צִפָּה זָהָב וְאֵת טְבֻעֹתָם עָשָׂה זָהָב וְגו' (לו, לד)

And he coated the kerashim with gold, and their rings he made of gold... (36:34)

Wealth From Selling Lumber:

Rav Chaim Yona Frankel *zt”l*, a *chasid* of the Shinover Rebbe zy”a, once spent Shabbos of Parshas Vayakhel with his

Rebbe. During Kriyas Hatorah, he was honored with an *Aliyah*.

The Rebbe was serving a *Baal Koreh* and he finished his *Aliyah* with this verse: “And he coated the *kerashim* with gold, and their

rings he made of gold as holders for the *brichim* (bars), and he coated the *brichim* with gold.”

At that time, Rav Chaim Yona was unsure what business he should go into. One of his options was the lumber business but he also had other options. One of the reasons he came to Shinova was to consult with the Rebbe and ask which business

venture he should pursue. However, when the Rebbe concluded his *Aliyah* by saying that the *kerashim* – planks of wood – will be coated with gold, he understood that he should go into the wood business and he would merit becoming wealthy.

He left Shinova on *Motzoei Shabbos* and he did, in fact, become a wealthy lumber dealer.

Parshas Para

The Connection Between Torah and Para Adumah:

The Sefarim Hakedoshim ask why the portion of *Parah Adumah* begins with the *pasuk* saying that it is the “*chukas haTorah*”, as if it is the only law in the Torah. Why doesn't it simply say that it is the “*chukas haparah*”?

The Rebbe of Kobrin *zy”a* (Sefer Imros Moshe) explains

that the entire Torah is comparable to the *Parah Adumah*. We find that a *Parah Adumah* purifies people who are *tamei* but also makes people who were *tahor* impure. So too, he explains that the Torah does the same.

If someone is “*tamei*”, meaning that he learns Torah “*shelo l'shma*”, for impure purposes, or if he is impure in the sense that he is on a low level of *ruchnius*,

still and all, if he learns Torah he will be purified. **The Torah that he learns will lift him out of his impure state and make him *tamor*.** However, Torah can also “make pure people *tamei*.” If someone is on a high level of *ruchnius* but he learns Torah “*shelo l’shma*”, with improper intentions, that Torah will make him *tamei*. This is as Chazal say (Taanis 7A): “If someone learns Torah *l’shma*, it is a medicine that provides life for him. But if someone learns Torah *shelo l’shma*, it becomes a poison of death for him.”

Knowing that One Doesn’t Know:

Sefer Cheshbah Tova quotes Rav Henschel of Alexander *zy”a* as saying that we find that the Zohar Hakadosh (Chelek 2, 82B) calls the mitzvos “*itin*” (“advice”) because mitzvos

provide a person with wisdom and knowledge.

He asks that this is understandable in regards to mitzvos that we know the reason for. We can certainly learn wisdom and understand how to best serve Hashem from learning about such mitzvos. But what can we learn from a mitzvah like Parah Adumah, which we don’t know the reason for?

He answers that “knowing that one doesn’t know” is in and of itself a form of great wisdom. The Shlah Hakadosh writes in this vein that **the purpose of all knowledge is for a person to recognize that he doesn’t really know.**

Knowing that One Cannot Accomplish Anything:

The *piyyut* that we recite in

Yotzros for Parshas Parah states: “To purify the impure and to make impure the pure with holy words.”

The Bais Avrohom of Slonim *zy”a* (Yalkut Sichos Kodesh M’Habeis Avrohom – Tzav 5692) explains with a story:

When the holy brother, Rav Shmelke of Nikolsberg *zy”a* and Rav Pinchos, the author of *Sefer Haflaah, zy”a*, came for the first time to the Magid of Mezheritch *zy”a*, he asked them why they had come to him, and they replied, “We are looking for a *derech* in *avodas Hashem*.”

The Magid then told them, “A Jewish man may get up to say *Tikkun Chatzos*, and he recites the words with *kavanah*, and he then learns for several hours until Shacharis, and he then davens Shacharis with all the appropriate *kavanos*, reciting the Ketores, Boruch She’amar,

Kriyas Shema, and Shemonah Esrei with the *kavanos*, and he then learns some more after davening, and he then thinks that he has accomplished something with his *avodah*... He should know that his *avodah* is thrown away into the depths of a deep chasm...”

The *Seder Hayom* that the Magid described was exactly what the two brothers did every day. They realized the Magid was speaking about them and they said, “**It would have been worthwhile to walk from one end of the globe to the other to hear these words.**”

With this in mind, the *piyyut* can be understood as saying that “holy words” can transform something impure into something pure. When one davens properly, he can totally purify himself. However, holy words also have the ability to do the opposite, as if one takes

credit for himself and thinks his davening accomplished something, he falls from his lofty level into a deep chasm.

Unquestioning Emunah:

The *pasuk* states (Bamidbor 19:2): “This is the *chukah* of the Torah that Hashem commanded to say...” Rashi explains, “Because the Satan and the nations of the world taunt Yisroel, saying, ‘What is this commandment, and what purpose does it have?’ Therefore, the Torah uses the term ‘*chukah*.’ I have decreed it. You have no right to challenge it.”

Sefer Tiferes Shmuel explains that the main purpose of a mitzvah is to instill *emunah* into our hearts, and the main form of *emunah* is to believe and trust in Hashem unquestioningly, without the need for any investigations of our own. The

Sefarim Hakedoshim note that in the verse (Bereishis 15:6): “*V’he’emin b’Hashem*” (and he believed in Hashem), the word “*v’he’emin*” is written without a *yud*. This indicates that the ideal form of *emunah* is to believe in Hashem without any “*chochmas*”, as the letter *yud* symbolizes intelligence and wisdom. The *pasuk* says that because Avrohom believed in Hashem in this simple way, “it was considered an act of *tzedakah*.” So to speak, it was as if he was doing an act of *tzedakah* to Hashem by believing in Him without any questions or investigations of his own.

This concept is also seen in the Gemara (Bava Basra 10A), that says that *tzedakah* brings the redemption close. Chazal also say (Mechilta 28) that Yisroel will be redeemed in the *zechus* of *emunah*. As we explained, simple, unquestioning *emunah*

is called “*tzedakah*”. Thus, both statements of Chazal are saying the same thing.

This greatly bothers the nations of the world because they know that Klal Yisroel will be redeemed in this *zechus*. Therefore, they demand to know why we would do a mitzvah if we don't know its reason. They simple cannot comprehend this concept.

The reply is that it is a decree from Hashem and we must obey it. We say that **we believe in Hashem with unquestioning *emunah* and, therefore, we do not need to know the reasons for the mitzvos.**

This explains the words of the *pasuk*: “This is the *chukah* of Hashem that he commanded **to say.**” We are commanded to say that we fulfill His mitzvos because that is what He decreed, even if we do not know their

reasons.

Sefarim Hakedoshim state that **this type of *emunah* purifies the mind, and enables us to greet Yomim Tovim in purity.**

Chazal tell us this (Rosh Hashanah 16B) when they say that “a person is obligated to purify himself on the *regel*.” And the way we do this is by believing and trusting in Hashem with simplicity and without question.

In the merit of this *emunah*, which is beyond human comprehension and logic, we merit great supernatural miracles, in fulfillment of the verse (Tehillim 108:5): “Your kindness is beyond the Heavens.”

Teshuva Purifies the Hearts of Tzadikim:

The Gemara (Yoma 2A) says that the kohen who burned the

Parah Adumah was intentionally made to be *tamei* in order to remove a misconception from the hearts of the Tzedukim (who erroneously claimed that one who is *tamei* cannot perform the service of *Parah Adumah* before sunset).

The Divrei Shmuel of Slonim zy"va writes that this is a hint to Chazal's statement (Brachos 34B) that even complete *tzadikim* cannot stand in the place where *baalei teshuva* stand. The Gemara can be understood as saying that one who purifies himself reaches such a lofty level that he even "removes the Tzeduki from his heart", meaning that he removes any heretical thoughts he may have had. This is because ***teshuva* is so powerful that it can even purify a person from literal heresy.**

He adds that explains why one of the eleven ingredients in the Ketores was "*chelvona*". *Chelvona* is representative of those people who have fallen to a very lowly level. Thus, its inclusion indicates that even a person who is on the lowest level can become an ingredient in the holy Ketores.

This also explains why Chazal say (Yoma 26A) that Ketores would make its own wealthy. **The Ketores represents *teshuva* and *teshuva* uplifts even the lowliest people to great heights, which is greatest wealth one can have.**

The Rambam Writes About Those Who
Bring Joy to Widdows and Orphans

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Joy to These Unfortunate
Souls Is Comparable to
the Holy Shechinah!”**

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