



THANK YOU HASHEM

For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Mikeitz

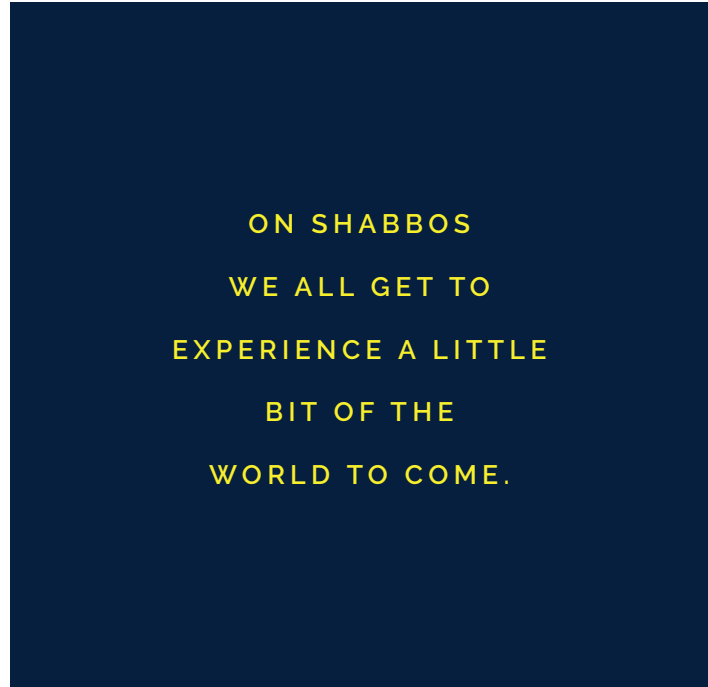
HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

וַיָּרֶב אֶתוֹ בְּמִרְכָּבַת הַמִּשְׁנָה אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ...

And he had him ride in the chariot of his second-in-command...

OUR SAGES FAMOUSLY taught that the Avos served as the Merkavah, Hashem’s chariot. The Sefas Emes expresses a contradistinction between Avraham, Yitzchok, Yaakov and Yosef HaTzaddik. While the Avos represent the aspect of “*neshama b’lo guf*”, pure spirituality, as Chazal teach that the Avos were not affected by the yetzer hara, Yosef HaTzaddik represents the concept of “*neshama b’soch guf*”, the synthesis between spirituality and physicality and the ultimate triumph of the former over the latter. Commenting on the words “*ki chol bashomayim uva’aretz*”, the Zohar HaKadosh explains that a tzaddik is “*maan d’acheid shmaya v’ara*”, one who binds heaven and earth. The words “**Ki chol**” is numerically equivalent to the word “**Yesod**”, the spiritual energy of the tzaddik, as the verse states, “*V’tzaddik yesod olam.*” Thus, “*Ki chol*”, the defining quality of **Yesod**, the tzaddik, is “*bashomayim uva’aretz*”; he is able to achieve a synthesis between body and soul, illuminating the physicality of the human experience with the brilliant light of spirituality. Indeed, the physical manifestation of the *middah* of **Yesod** is the *bris* - at once the lowliest and most physical aspect of the human body, as well as the medium through which new souls, spiritual beings, are brought into the physical world; “*bashomayim uva’aretz.*” This,



explains the Sefas Emes, is why Yosef HaTzaddik is described by the Torah as having been appointed “*mirkeves hamishneh*”, Pharaoh’s second-in-command. Indeed, as the quintessential tzaddik and master over the *bris*, Yosef became a “**Merkavah**” for “**Mishneh**”, the dual forces of body and soul. 🤴

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 🤴 Pharaoh dreams of seven fat cows being swallowed up by seven lean cows, and seven fat ears of grain being swallowed by seven lean ears. Yosef interprets the dreams: seven years of plenty will be followed by seven years of hunger. Pharaoh appoints Yosef as second-in-command. Yosef marries Osnas and they have two sons, Manashe and Ephraim.
- 🤴 Ten of Yosef’s brothers descend to Egypt to purchase grain. The youngest, Binyamin, stays home with Yaakov. Although they do not recognize him, Yosef recognizes his brothers and accuses them of being spies. He imprisons Shimon until they will bring Binyamin to him. They later discover that their money has been returned to them.
- 🤴 Yehuda assumes personal responsibility for Binyamin and Yaakov allows him to be taken. Yosef releases Shimon and invites the brothers to dinner. He then plants his silver goblet in Binyamin’s sack. When the brothers set out for home, they are searched and arrested upon discovery of the goblet. Yosef offers to set them free and retain only Binyamin as his slave.

P'nimiyus haParsha

An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

ויאמר פרעה אל-עבדיו הנמצא קצה איש אשר רוח אלהים בו...

And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Is there found another like this man, within whom resides the spirit of God?..."

AS WE HAVE seen, the holy Sefas Emes draws a distinction between the Avos and Yosef HaTzaddik. He develops this idea based on a teaching from the Midrash and discusses its connection to the yom tov of Chanukah which always falls around parshas Mikeitz.

In a comment on the words, "Is there found another like this man...", the Midrash praises the Avos with terms that relate to their bond with the transcendent realms of spirituality before praising Yosef HaTzaddik with the words, "If we go from one world to the other, we won't find another like him", implying a connection to our physical reality.

The tzaddik explains that Yosef shared this quality with his brothers. Collectively, the *Shevatim* served as the theological source for the Jewish perspective which sees physicality as aiding our closeness with Hashem and revealing, instead of concealing, His life-giving presence.

The four *Degalim*-camps of the *Shevatim* in the *midbar* corresponded to the four wicked kingdoms and the faithless arrogance with which they deny the unified sovereignty of Hashem over all of creation. The very existence of the Jewish nation encapsulated within these four camps, entirely permeated with faith and subservience to the divine will, stands testament to an opposing perspective. We see the world not as a *Malchus D'Sitra Achara*, a faithless kingdom devoid of spirituality, but rather as a *Malchus D'Kedusha*, a holy vessel bursting

with Hashem's presence and opportunity to connect with Him.

Throughout our tumultuous history, mighty empires embodying the very antitheses of our holy faith have faded away on their own, without the direct involvement of the Jewish people. However, in their victory against the Greeks, the Jewish nation miraculously merited to forcibly reclaim sovereignty, transforming the "*Malchus HaRisha'ah*" of Yavan into a "*Malchus D'Kedusha*" bursting with holiness and the miraculous energy of a transcendent realm. This, explains the Sefas Emes, is why the Torah reading for Chanukah is the *parsha* of the *Nesi'im*, the heads of the *Shevatim* who represent the counterpoint in holiness to the Greeks.

The coming of Moshiach will follow this pattern as well, transforming the nations' perception of reality and enabling them to see the world from our perspective of faith. Indeed, the word "*Chanukah*" is related to the word "*chinuch*", preparation for and initiation into a new phase of being. Ideed, our ancestor's miraculous victory against the Greeks in the Chanukah story serves as "*chinuch*", preparation and initiation, for the times of Moshiach – the true and total victory of spiritual light over physical darkness, humility over arrogance, and faith over doubt. May we hold tight to the great lights of the Chanukah we have experienced and take them with us to warm and illuminate the cold, dark winter ahead, shining the way to *yemos hamoshiach, b'karov b'yameinu!* 🕎



The root of the word "Chanukah" is "chinuch", initiation and preparation. Chanukah is chinuch for the times of Moshiach.

Profiles of Tzaddikim

Biographical sketches of the Chassidic Masters

Reb Aharon HaGadol of Karlin zy"ta

Reb Aharon ben Yaakov Perlow zy"ta was born in Poland in 1736 (5497). Known as Reb Aharon HaGadol, "Reb Ahron the Great", this incredible tzaddik was counted among the closest students of the Maggid of Mezritch. More than merely continuing in the ways of his Rebbe, Reb Aharon directly facilitated the growth of Chassidus in Eastern Europe and brought the rapidly growing movement to Belarus and Lithuania.

Although this tzaddik only lived for 36 years, the time he spent in this world was utilized to illuminate the minds and hearts of the simple Jews around him, bringing everyone he came into contact with closer to the Master of the world. In fact, so perfectly did Reb Ahron HaGadol embody the quintessence of the burgeoning movement, that for a period of time, Chassidim were colloquially referred to as "Karliners", regardless of which particular Chassidic court they were associated with.

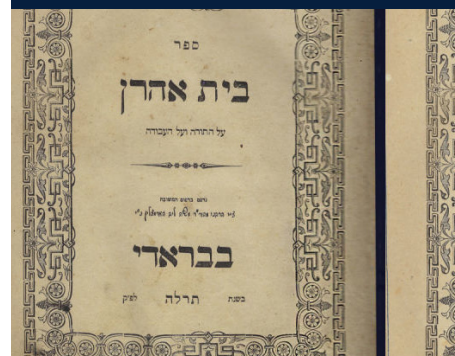
After his sudden passing in 1772 (5533), the mantle of leadership was passed on to Reb Aharon's closest disciple, Reb Shlomo of Karlin, and subsequently Reb Aharon's son, Reb Asher.

Today, the Karlin-Stolin dynasty is still thriving, with dedicated Chassidim all over the world. Karliners are most notably known for their unique manner of *tefillah*, in which the *minyán* cries out the words of davening together. They are also known for their warm hospitality towards Jews of all backgrounds.

Although Reb Ahron HaGadol did not pen any *sefarim* of his own, his thoughts and teachings are compiled in sefer Beis Ahron, written by his grandson, Reb Aharon ben Asher. He is also famous for his well-known Shabbos *zemer*, "*Kah Echsof*," which is sung by Jews of all backgrounds and denominations on Shabbos night.

Zechuso Yogen Aleinu! This section is written by R' Akiva Bruck, author of "From Behind the Curtain" (Mosaica Press). 🕎

A first edition printing of sefer Beis Ahron which contains the teachings of Reb Ahron HaGadol of Karlin zy"ta



Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

HAVING DISCUSSED THE awesome holiness of Shabbos Morning and the manner in which we enter the *Beis HaMelech*, the Chernovitzer Rav sets out to portray the spiritual energy of tefillas Mussaf. The tzaddik begins by describing the flourishing of *Middas HaAnavah*, the trait of humility. Chazal tell us that “*habah l'taheir, mesayein oso*”, when a Jew seeks to purify his ways, he is assisted from heaven. The tzaddik writes that the form of this assistance with regard to the trait of humility is unique. When one is working on the *middah* of *anavah*, Hashem assists that person by increasing the measure of His presence in that person's life, causing his awareness of Hashem's greatness to grow and deepening his own sense of smallness. This may be compared to a king who is made aware of the sincere awe for royalty exhibited by one of the lower ranking members of his military. The king thought, 'If this is how much awe he has without even having seen the palace grounds, imagine how he will feel if he were brought here!' The king commanded that the soldier be brought to the palace. Upon entering the outermost courtyard, the soldier almost fell to the ground because of his awesome wonder and awe. “If only I could spend all my days here!”, he thought. The king commanded that he be brought further and further inside, into the inner sanctum. Completely overwhelmed by the awesome display of royalty, the man was practically reduced to tears in his great awe. Finally, the king commanded that the man be brought into the courtyard of the throne room where the king himself sat. This was too much for the soldier. He fell on his face and cried out, “How awesome is this place! I can't handle any more!” Next week, we shall explore the end of this parable and unravel its meaning. *Good Shabbos!* 🕎

This section is adapted from the sefer “Sidduro Shel Shabbos” by R' Chaim of Chernowitz zy”a (1760-1816)

Chassidus 101

Exploring the Foundations of Chassidus

THE QUALITY THAT distinguishes Man from animals is generally understood to be the ability to analyze critically, to make decisions based on a greater long-term goal rather than immediate gratification or pleasure. While it is true that this quality is unique to man, the tzaddikim teach that it is our faculty of *dibbur*, speech, which represents the most essential distinction between Man and the other levels of creation. We find this concept referenced in the very beginning of the Torah. When Hashem breathes life into Adam HaRishon, the Torah tells us that he became a “*nefesh chaya*”, a “living spirit.” Targum Onkeles translates this phrase as “*ruach mimalila*,” a “speaking spirit.”

It is no coincidence that two of our most precious and fundamental *mitzvos*, Torah study and davening, are achieved through *dibbur*. So much of *avodas Hashem* is founded upon the understanding that it is verbal communication to Hashem, reaching out to Him for whatever reason or need, that enables us to further develop our relationship with Him and draw down infinite *shefa* into our lives.

Chazal teach us that the way in which we can draw closest to Hashem is by way of mirroring His actions. A number of beautiful *sefarim* have been written to facilitate this effort, listing the different *middos* of Hashem and explaining how we can actualize those same *middos* in our own lives. While *dibbur* isn't a quality we generally think of when learning about the way Hashem interacts with us, this *middah* is in fact woven into the very fabric of creation. We know that the world was created through Hashem's *dibbur*, “*b'dvar Hashem shamayim na'asu*.” It therefore follows that as we

journey through this world with a focus on elevating physicality and bringing about a greater revelation of Hashem's Presence, it is our faculty of *dibbur* which holds the key to realizing this goal and experiencing it in a tangible way. Just as Hashem created and is constantly recreating the world through His *dibbur*, so too each one of us, through every utterance, are affecting the world on a cosmic level.

Reb Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin teaches that even seemingly mundane speech, when uttered by a Jew, is literally Torah. This is why one can find numerous comments through the Gemara regarding common sayings that simple Jews would say during those times. For example, after a lengthy discussion regarding the source of the well-known concept that saving a life supersedes Shabbos, the Gemara in Yoma comments regarding a statement of Shmuel, “One sharp pepper is better than a basketful of melons.” On a basic level, the Gemara is referring to the sharp logic behind Shmuel's statement compared to the other Amoraim. Reb Tzadok teaches us, however, that when a “simple Jew” would make this statement to a friend in the street, on a deeper level, his words contained this discussion mentioned in the Gemara.

The Chidushei HaRim writes that every word that a Jew utters is holy. The *kedusha* inherent in our speech is connected to our very souls, to our deepest identity. We were placed in this world to be *megaleh kvod shamayim*, to bring Hashem into our lives and the lives of those around us, and it is through this incredibly precious quality that we are able to make this dream a reality. 🕎

This section is written by R' Akiva Bruck, author of “From Behind the Curtain” (Mosaica Press)

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

A WEALTHY AND learned man once came to the home of the Chofetz Chaim to buy some of his sefarim. He asked for a copy of all his works, except for one - *sefer Shemiras Halashon*, a classic work which outlines the laws of *lashon hara* and *rechilus*, forms of gossip and forbidden speech.

When the tzaddik asked about this conspicuous exclusion, he explained, "I have extensive dealings with many people in the course of my business. The norms of the business world are such that I could not possibly adhere to all the laws involved in guarding my speech. This *sefer* is therefore of no use to me."

The Chofetz Chaim replied that he had recently gone to Reb Yisroel Salanter to discuss this very problem! "I told him that I doubted the utility of this *sefer* since businessmen would find it too difficult to abide by the laws of careful speech."

"In response, Reb Yisroel told me the following: 'Even if you succeed only in evoking a heartbroken sigh from a Jew who is aware of his sins, your toil in writing and publishing this work will have all been worthwhile.'"

Never underestimate the power of a Jewish sigh. Knowledge of and feeling sincere pain over our spiritual failings is the first step on the journey to correcting them. 🙏

"THANK YOU HASHEM FOR SHABBOS KODESH!" IS A WEEKLY PROJECT OF @TYHASHEM

"Thank You Hashem" is a powerful sound bite. These simple words are a prayer, blessing, appreciation, sanctification, and expression of spiritual intimacy—all in one. Jews from all walks of life utter them in all life circumstances, finding meaning and strength in direct access to Hashem. Our mission is to ignite that passion and pride in every Jew worldwide. To remind us all that Hashem exists in every single aspect of life. That He loves each of us in every situation, environment, and spiritual position. And that by saying His name with gratitude, we return His love every day.

"THANK YOU HASHEM
FOR SHABBOS KODESH! WEEKLY"
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PRINTING SPONSORED BY:

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