



THANK YOU HASHEM

For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Eikev

HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

... וְהָיָה עַקֵּב תִּשְׁמָעוּן אֶת הַמִּצְוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְשָׁמַרְתֶּם וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם

And it will be when you listen to these commandments and observe them carefully...

OUR PARSHA BEGINS with the words "V'haya eikev tishme'un", "And it will be when you listen." Moshe Rabbeinu goes on to enumerate the wondrous blessings that will come upon am Yisrael when they are living in conscious alignment with the will of Hashem as expressed in the Torah. The tzaddikim pick up on the fact that the word "eikev", which in this context means "when" or "because" (you will listen), also means "heel" - a common reference to the final generation before the coming of Moshiach, "Ikvisa d'Meshicha." The Mei HaShiloach, for example, teaches that this verse foretells the glorious state in which am Yisrael will abide after all the necessary clarifications and rectifications are completed: "V'haya eikev": at the end of time, it will be ultimately revealed that "tishme'un": Am Yisrael was always connected to the will of Hashem, always listening to His words

echoing deep within their souls. One of the primary challenges of our generation - particularly in our current situation - is the malady of sadness and despair. Thankfully, Hashem - in His infinite Mercy - sent us tzaddikim like Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai, the Arizal, the Baal Shem Tov, and Rebbe Nachman after them who presented us with the tools necessary to approach the difficulties of our time through the eyes of faith, positivity, and radical optimism. With the joy that emerges from the teachings of these special tzaddikim who progressively revealed the inner light of Torah, the unfeeling "heel" of our times becomes penetrated by the joyous warmth of a deeper insight into Hashem's love and the steady elevation of existence. Chazal teach that the word "V'haya" always connotes joy. The word "tishme'un" may be seen as a form of the word "Shimon", a reference to Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai. Thus, we may read the pasuk in the following way: "V'haya eikev": The paralyzing sadness and debilitating despair of the final generation will need to be combatted by the great joy that results from the deep teachings of "tishme'un", Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai and the tzaddikim after him who expounded on his revelation of the Torah's inner light. 🕎

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 🕎 Moshe continues his closing address to the b'nei Yisrael. He promises that if they will fulfill the mitzvos, they will prosper in Eretz Yisrael.
- Moshe also rebukes the failings of the previous generation, recalling the Cheit Ha'Egel, the episode of Korach's rebellion, the report of the Meraglim, and their angering Hashem at Taveirah, Massah, and Kivros Hataavah. But he also speaks of Hashem's forgiveness of their sins and the luchos sheniyyos.
- 🕎 Moshe tells the people that their eating mann for forty years was to teach them that, "man does not live on bread alone, but by the utterance of Hashem's mouth does man live."
- 🕎 Moshe describes the land they are about to enter as "flowing with milk and honey," blessed with the shivas haminim.
- Moshe describes the rewards of fulfilling the mitzvos and the suffering that results from their neglect - in what would become the second paragraph of Shema.

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

DURING HIS DAYS as a student at the Mirrer Yeshiva, the renowned gaon Reb Refoel Dovid Auerbach would frequently visit the home of great tzaddik Reb Shlom'ke of Zvhil. This was due to the urging of his father, Reb Chaim, who was convinced that Reb Shlom'ke Zvhiller was the greatest miracle-worker of their generation. On one occasion, Reb Refoel Dovid was greeted at Reb Shlom'ke's door by the Rebbe's devoted Chassid, Reb Eliyahu Roth. Reb Shlom'ke had gone out and Reb Eliyahu was alone in the house. Agreeing to Reb Refoel Dovid's request in the hope of seizing this special opportunity, Reb Eliyahu took the visitor on a limited "tour" of Reb Shlom'ke's home, where poverty and privation were apparent in every corner.

Among other miserable features of the dilapidated house was Reb Shlom'ke's bed, where rows of moths converged. Reb Eliyahu explained that when he attempted to buy some poison to exterminate the moths, he had been stopped by Reb Shlom'ke, who insisted that spraying them would be an act of tza'ar baalei Chayim. When Reb Eliyahu tried to convince Reb Shlom'ke that the moths might harm him, Reb Shlom'ke declared, "I have an agreement with these moths. In return for my not killing them, they do not harm me!"

While certainly an extreme example, we can all learn from the remarkable sensitivity of Reb Shlom'ke Zvhiller! 🕎

Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

WE HAVE BEEN discussing the special energy of Shabbos and its relationship with the *Sefirah* of **Tiferes**, Hashem's pride in am Yisrael. The holy Chernovitzer ends off this section by demonstrating how the entirety of Shabbos is bound with the trait and concept of *Tiferes*. While the full presentation of these ideas is certainly beyond the scope of this short column, the tzaddikim teach that the Ten *Sefiros* (modes with which Hashem creates and relates to our world) may be seen as divided among the four letters of Hashem's essential Name, the *Shem Havaya*. The **crown of the Yud** hints to *Kesser*, the **Yud** itself is *Chochmah*, the first **Heh** is *Binah*, the **Vav** represents the six *Sefiros* from *Chessed* to *Yesod*, and the final **Heh** is *Malchus*. As the center point of the lower six *Sefiros* it represents, *Tiferes* is often associated with the letter *Vav*. The tzaddik writes that as the center point and unifying aspect of the six days of the week, Shabbos is also associated with the letter *vav* - the number six. As we have mentioned in the past, the Shabbos we experience in this world has a spiritual source - an element in the heavenly realms above which similarly unifies six spiritual powers. On Shabbos, the Master of the world descends from the Shabbos above into our experience of Shabbos below, unifying heaven and earth as one. Because Hashem is represented by the letter *aleph* which hints to His absolute Oneness, the spiritual structure of Shabbos is composed of the letter **vav** - the heavenly Shabbos, the letter **aleph** - the unifying presence of Hashem, and Shabbos below - also represented by the letter **vav**. These three letters (*vav aleph vav*) represent a specific expansion of the letter *vav* which is associated with rectification, kindness, and sweetening. Thus, Shabbos is entirely wrapped up within the *middah* of *Tiferes*, Hashem's rejoicing in the splendor of His creation, and the rectification, sweetening, and blessing this activates throughout our world. 🕎

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

P'nimiyus Ha'Halacha

The Inner Dimension of Jewish Law

CONTINUING WITH THE *halachos* of *birchos kriyas Shema*, one is not permitted to interrupt during these *berachos*. This includes interrupting for "*baruch Hu uvaruch Shemo*" (*Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 124:8), *Kedusha* of *Uva l'Tzion* (*Yabia Omer* 5:7), as well as the thirteen *Middos HaRachamim* (*Otzrot Yosef* 4:4). If one hears the congregation reciting *Modim D'Rabbanan*, he should bow and say the first three words, "*Modim anachnu lach*". The rest should be recited in one's thought before continuing the *birchos kriyas shema*. (*Mishna Berurah* 66:20) If one hears *Kedusha*, one can only answer "*Kadosh Kadosh...*" and "*Baruch Kavod...*", but not "*Yimloch Hashem...*" This is because one is permitted to interrupt during the *birchos kriyas shema* for *Kaddish*, *Kedusha*, and *Barchu*. Since this is a place where no other interruption is to be made, we start *Kedusha* from "*Kadosh*" in accordance with the ruling of the *Shulchan Aruch* in all cases (OC 125:1) and not like the *Arizal* who holds that the entire text of *Kedusha* is recited by the congregation. (*Kaf Hachaim* 66:18) The reason we are not allowed to respond with "*Yimloch Hashem*" is because a majority of the *poskim* hold that "*Yimloch*" is not one of the relevant *pesukim* said by *Yeshayahu* and *Yechezkel* from the *malachim*. (*Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 66:5, *Chayei Adam* 20:4, *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 16:3, *Mishna Berurah* 66:17, *Shu"t Yabia Omer* OC 2:4 and others.)

Toward the end of his Chassidic masterpiece, the holy Baal HaTanya explains the relationship between the content of the *birchos kriyas Shema* and the content of *Shema* itself. (*Likutei Amarim, Tanya* chapter 49)

The tzaddik writes that the extreme levels of devotion to Hashem expressed in Chazal's understanding of *Shema* - *b'chol l'vavcha*, *b'chol nafshecha*, *uv'chol me'odecha*, the requirement to cast aside every ounce of personal consideration for the love of Hashem - begs the question of how it is at all possible to reach such elevated levels. How is a Jew to arrive at the willingness to overlook barriers to spiritual growth emerging from even the most loving relationships, overcome

the seductions of the yetzer hara, and give away all of one's money and even one's very life for Hashem? The Baal HaTanya answers that when a Jew understands the extent of Hashem's overwhelming love for him, this triggers a reciprocal love that gushes forth with the power necessary to overcome any personal considerations that may stand in the way. It is in order to foster this understanding, explains the tzaddik, that Chazal instituted the *birchos kriyas shema*.

In the *beracha* of *Yotzer Ohr*, we read about the *Chayos* and *Ofanim*, awesome spiritual beings who praise Hashem in the purest, most wondrous fashion. But even these remarkable creatures must admit that "*Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh*", while Hashem is removed and distant from them, "*Meloh chol ha'aretz Kevodo*", His glory fills the earth - His primary focus is on the service of the Jewish nation that rises from the lowliest pockets of existence. Indeed, we proceed to "*Ahavas Olam*", conjuring the great love Hashem expressed in limiting His infinite light (*olam* implies *he'elem*, concealment) so as to create our finite world. With great joy we announce, "bountiful and additional mercy He showered upon us" - even more than the lofty *Chayos* and *Ofanim* above! "He chose us from among the nations of the world" - despite our lowly and corporeal bodies, "And brought us close to praise Him".

After reminding ourselves of the awesome love Hashem expresses for us each and every moment in forsaking the upper realms of perfect and pristine holiness to create our world and choose us each and every moment, we awaken a great reciprocal love for Hashem Who adores us in an infinite way. In the holy words of the Baal HaTanya, "When the wise person will place these words in the depth of his heart and mind - "like water reflects the face" - his heart will be enflamed and his soul will clothe itself in a spirit of benevolence, to leave and forsake everything and desire only to connect with Hashem and become subsumed within His Light with great cleaving and yearning in the aspect of "kissing; the unification of spirit with Spirit." 🕎