



THANK YOU HASHEM

For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Mishpatim

HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

אם-כסף תלוּה את-עמי אֶת-העני עמך לא-תהיה לו כְּנֹשֶׁה...

"If you lend money to My people, to the poor among you, do not act toward them as a creditor..."

THERE ARE MANY ideas relayed in the *seforim hakedoshim* that serve to deter a person from sinning. Obviously, *yiras Shomayim* in any of its three primary forms - *Yiras Ha'Oneish*, *Yiras Cheit*, and *Yiras Ha'Romemus* - will help a person steer clear of acting in a way that goes against the Torah. The realization that one's compulsion for physical gratification is in fact a misguided desire for holiness can also bring a person back from the brink and allow him to channel this desire in a positive manner. In this week's parsha, the Degel Machaneh Ephraim reveals a unique perspective that can serve as yet another deterrent to sin. The tzaddik teaches that the *Shechinah Hakedosha*, Hashem's in-dwelling presence, accompanies a Jew wherever he goes. It emerges that when one gives in to the ego-driven yetzer hara for lowliness and physicality, he is actively dragging the *Shechinah* down into the mud along with him. Can you imagine a greater act of cruelty? If at the time of the *yetzer hara's* attack one remembers that the claim of, "I am not hurting anyone etc." is in fact not true, as, more than simply an act of spiritual dissonance, a sin is in fact an act of incredible cruelty, this will provide the impetus to break from the *yetzer hara's* seductive net. The Degel teaches that this concept is hinted in our pasuk: "*Im kesef*" - in addition to meaning "money", the word

EVERYTHING
WILL WORK OUT
JUST TRUST ME.

- Hashem

"kesef" can connote desire, "*kissufim*". When a person has a yearning, "*talveh*" - to connect to physical desires, "*es ami es ha'ani imach*" - remember that the *Shechinah*, which is referred to in the Zohar as a "pauper", is within you, My nation. Therefore, "*lo sihyeh lo k'nosheh*" - don't forget the *Shechinah* in a moment of ego-driven passion; She is with you and is impacted by your actions! 🤴

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- 👑 After *matan Torah*, a series of legislative commandments are issued to the Jewish nation, including: the laws of the indentured servant; the penalties for murder, kidnapping, assault, and theft; civil laws pertaining to redress of damages, the granting of loans and the responsibilities of the "*Arbah Shomrim*"; and the rules pertaining to courts of law.
- 👑 Also included are laws warning against the mistreatment of *geirim*; the observance of the *yomim tovim* and the agricultural gifts that are to be brought to the Beis HaMikdash in Yerushalayim; the prohibition against cooking meat with milk; and the mitzvah of prayer.
- 👑 Hashem promises to bring the Jews to Eretz Yisrael and warns them against adopting the idolatrous beliefs of its current inhabitants.
- 👑 The Jewish nation proclaims, "*Na'aseh v'nishma*." Moshe leaves Ahron and Chur in charge of the camp and ascends Har Sinai where he remains for forty days and forty nights to receive the Torah from Hashem.



P'nimiyus haParsha

An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

ואלה המשפטים אשר תשים לפניהם...

“And these are the statutes you shall place before them...”

PARSHAS YISRO ENDS with the halacha that the Kohanim must ascend the Mizbeach using a ramp instead of stairs. The reason for this is that the motion required for climbing stairs would cause their nakedness to be revealed, disrespecting the holiness of the Mizbeach. The Midrash poses two questions. First, why does the verse say that climbing stairs would cause the Kohein's nakedness to be revealed – one of the bigdei Kehuna was the “michnasayim”, pants! Second, what is the correlation between this law and the beginning of the parsha which immediately follows, “V'eileh hamishpatim asher tasim lifnei'hem”, “and these are the laws you shall place before them”?

The Midrash answers the first question by revealing that the Torah wasn't referring to actual nakedness. Rather, the manner of walking which climbing stairs would necessitate would be an expression of arrogance and flamboyance – a disgrace to the Mizbeach akin to the revelation of nakedness. Indeed, the verse, “v'lo saaleh b'ma'alos al mizb'chi”, “And do not ascend the Mizbeach using stairs” may be seen as hinting to this alternative interpretation as well – “And do not lift yourself up in arrogance and hubris above the Mizbeach.”

The Sefas Emes teaches that a primary strategy for keeping our

natural tendency toward pride in check is to approach life with an attitude of strict discernment. Before every action, a Jew must stop and think, “Is this action going to enhance my awareness of Hashem, or is it only to increase my own sense of pride, thus effectively pushing Hashem out of my life?” If we would pause for a moment between desire and action to clarify our motive, it would be simpler for us to “walk with shorter steps”, acting in a way of humility and connection to the Master of the world.

The tzaddik uses this idea to explain the juxtaposition between the commandment not to climb the Mizbeach using stairs at the end of parshas Yisro and the opening line of parshas Mishpatim. The first verse in our parsha, “V'eileh hamishpatim asher tasim lifnei'hem”, “and these are the statutes you shall place before them”, may be seen as a reference to “Mishpatim”, the sense of judgement and discernment that each Jew must employ “lifnei'hem”, before each and every action, both big and small. In putting these two parshios together, the Torah is teaching us the antidote to arrogance: If we want to ensure that we don't walk upon the Mizbeach with long steps of hubris, we must be sure to place “Mishpatim” before our impulsive, egotistical tendencies; clarifying our true motive and remembering the true purpose of life – to reveal the Infinite One from behind the concealment. 🕎



Pausing to clarify the true nature of our motives before we act will enable us to walk with small steps of humility and G-d-consciousness.

Profiles of Tzaddikim

Biographical sketches of the Chassidic Masters

The Chozeh of Lublin zy”a

Reb Yaakov Yitzchak HaLevi Horowitz was born in Shbarshin, Poland in 1745 (5505). He is one of the most beloved figures of the Chassidic movement, with countless teachings and stories recounted throughout the Jewish world until today. One of the foremost disciples of the Maggid of Mezritch, he continued his learning under the Rebbe Reb Elimelech of Lizhensk, Reb Zusha of Anipoli, and Reb Shmuel Shmelke of Nikolsburg after his rebbe passed away. His primary teacher during this period was the Rebbe Reb Elimelech.

This tzaddik is lovingly referred to as “The Chozeh,” the “Seer” of Lublin, a reference to his remarkable spiritual sight. When a petitioner would seek his guidance, he would be able to discern his character, past deeds, and the very root of his soul by simply glancing at his forehead. This enabled the Chozeh to guide each and every person in a unique way, set in the general context of his overwhelming love for the Jewish nation.

After leaving Lantzut to settle in Lublin, thousands of Chassidim flocked to him to join his court, among them many famous tzaddikim in their own right: Reb Simcha Bunim of Pshischa, Reb Meir of Apta, Reb Dovid of Lelov, Reb Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov, Reb Naftali of Ropshitz, the Maor V'Shemesh, and the Sar Shalom of Belz.

The Chozeh left this world in 1815 (5575) in the city of Lublin. His writings are contained in four works: *Divrei Emes*, *Zos Zikaron*, *Zikaron Zos*, and *Zikaron Tov*.

It is difficult to describe the impact this incredible tzaddik had on the movement of Chassidus and the Jewish world as a whole. Countless dynasties of Chassidus stemmed from this tzaddik's court, most notably: Belz, Lelov, Pshischa, Dinov, Ropshitz, Modzhitz, Gur, Radomsk, Alexander, and Bobov. It is because of this that to this very day, his teachings are learned all throughout the Chassidic world, enabling each of us to experience the sweetness of his teachings and his incredible *ahavas Yisrael*. 🕎

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

A first printing (1869) of sefer Zikaron Zos, compiled teachings from the Chozeh M'Lublin



Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

WE HAVE SPENT the past few weeks discussing the Chernovizter's *mashal* of the three servants of the king who were appointed to fix the royal crown. After explaining the *nimshal* at length, the tzaddik returns to his treatment of Shabbos day. Last week, we explained that Moshe Rabbeinu embodied the awe and humility of the third servant, whose sense of nullification before the king's incredible grandeur continuously grows as he is led further and further into the inner chambers of the palace. The Chernovitzer teaches that this process takes place during the *tefillos* of each Shabbos morning. During *pesukei d'zimrah*, we rise to the "courtyard of Hashem". When we stand for *Shemoneh Esrei* we are entering the "palace of Hashem". Finally, Tefillas Musaf represents our entry to the "chamber of Hashem". These three levels are hinted to in the *pasuk*, "*Ashrei tivchar us'kareiv yishkon chatzeirecha, nisb'ah b'tuv beisecha, k'dosh heichalecha*", "Fortunate is the one who is chosen and draws forth to dwell in Your **courtyard**, to become satisfied with the goodness of Your **house**, the holiness of Your **chamber**." Just as in the *mashal*, when we arrive at Hashem's throne room, so to speak, we are completely overwhelmed by His grandeur and lack the capacity to process the awe that permeates our being. This, explains the tzaddik, is why the only description of the "*heichal*" refers to its holiness, and not to the features of its furnishings etc. All we can say about it is that it is "*kodesh*", holy and removed from our understanding. Fascinatingly, the numerical value of the opening and closing letters of this verse, plus the value of ten for the ten words, is equal to the *gematriya* of "*Aliyas Shabbos*", "The Shabbos Elevation", for it describes the three-step spiritual journey that takes place each and every Shabbos morning. 🕯

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

ONE OF THE most foundational concepts in Chassidus involves a paradigm shift in our perspective and understanding of our relationship with Hashem. Before the *derech* of the Baal Shem Tov began to spread throughout Europe and revolutionized *avodas Hashem* for thousands, the majority of Jews were laymen; individuals who, while simple in their faith and fear of Heaven, were not learned in Gemara or Halacha. In fact, many were illiterate and their *tefillos* relied on their memory of the words.

During this time, there were few *drashos* given in local shuls. In contrast to the common practice of the Rav of a community or shul speaking every Shabbos, in those times, *drashos* were reserved for unique Shabbosim; i.e. Shabbos Shuva, Shabbos HaGadol, Shabbos Nachamu, etc. Much of the content of these lectures were focused on the shortcomings of the Jewish People; specifically, their lack of Torah learning as an impetus for all other faults and spiritual deficiencies. And all of this, amid perpetual lack of resources for Jews to learn or receive an education in the first place!

While we know that Chassidic Masters were each incredible talmidei chachamim in their own right and advocated for each and every Jew to learn whatever they could, they realized that the notion of our inadequacies being a byproduct of our lack of knowledge or *hasmadah* in learning were leaving many Jews feeling hopeless and in total despair. How can we develop a connection to Hashem if we don't even know how to learn properly? Why would Hashem want to have a relationship with us if we aren't capable of excelling in our Torah study?

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

One of the *chiddushim* of the Baal Shem Tov and his talmidim was for us to recognize and always understand that a Jew's relationship with the Master of the world is eternal and unbreakable, abiding regardless of one's shortcomings or mistakes. More so, it was specifically through focusing on the good that we do, on every little positive thought, word or action, that can propel us to realize our fullest potential and experience a meaningful and passionate relationship with our Father in heaven.

This is not to say, God forbid, that one shouldn't constantly strive to improve their learning. To the contrary, understanding its primary place within the general goal of building on the foundation of our unconditional relationship with Hashem, these tzaddikim constantly stressed the infinite importance of traditional Torah learning. It is our perspective of our shortcomings, however, which required a major transformation. Rather than focusing on that which we lack and the areas in which we stumble, the tzaddikim taught that it is specifically through focusing on the good we bring to the world that will enable us to achieve greatness.

The Chiddushei HaRim famously explained the well-known *pasuk* of, "*sur meirah v'aseih tov* - turn from evil and do good," to mean that it is through "doing good," focusing on our strengths, that we are able to "turn from evil." May we merit to realize our fullest potential in all areas of *avodas Hashem* and experience our everlasting and unconditional relationship with the Creator in a tangible way. 🕯

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

THE YEAR WAS 1843. At a Rabbinical conference called by the Russian interior ministry, leaders of the Haskalah joined forces with the czarist government to advance their agenda of forced assimilation of the Jews of Russia. During the days of the conference, the holy Tzemach Tzekdek, Rebbe Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, was arrested a grand total of twenty-two times for his outspoken stance in defense of traditional Jewish life. Miraculously, his efforts eventually met with success. The following story took place a short while after the convention.

Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka, Rebbe Menachem Mendel's wife, was known to recite *Tehillim* constantly, but with many mispronunciations.

On one occasion, the Rebbetzin turned to her son Yehuda Leib, future Rebbe of Kopust, and said, "Isn't it strange? One would assume that after all these years, I should know the *Tehillim* perfectly, by heart!"

"Indeed", replied young Yehuda Leib. "But each time you recite them with new mistakes!"

The Rebbetzin later related this exchange to her esteemed husband, and added that perhaps she had better stop her custom rather than distort the holy words. "No," insisted Rebbe Menachem Mendel, "please continue to recite as before."

Later, the Rebbe admonished his son and instructed him to ask his mother for forgiveness. "What do you know?" he said. "My entire success in Petersburg was solely in the merit of your mother's *Tehillim*."

Never underestimate the power of heartfelt sincerity, no matter how unpolished its expression may appear. 🙏

"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"
IS WRITTEN BY **R' YAAKOV KLEIN**,
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