



Torah U'Tefilah

A Collection of Inspiring Insights

בס"ד

ה' חשוון
8 Cheshvon

∞ Besamei HaTorah ... Beneath the Surface

By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

ויהי רעב בארץ (יב"י) * (12:10) There was a famine in the land

The fourth *Nisayon* [test] of Avraham was that from the day heaven and earth were created, there had not been a famine in the world, except in the days of Avraham. Also, this famine was not universal, but it was just in the land of Canaan. This was to test Avraham so that he should go down to Mitzrayim, as it states, 'ויהי רעב בארץ וירד אברהם מצרימה', 'There was a famine in the land and Avram went down to Mitzrayim'.

(Otzar HaMedrashim – Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer 26)

∞ Parshah Thoughts - Ideas and Reflections - Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

Avraham was careful to return from Mitzrayim following the same route he took when he went down to Mitzrayim, in order to repay any outstanding debts (*Rashi*, 13:3). The *Chasam Sofer* suggests a novel approach to understanding this. Avraham expressed his monotheistic beliefs publicly, and he was mocked with questions of, "Where is your G-d when you need Him? Why hasn't He given you food or money? Isn't He all powerful?" Avraham left these questions unanswered. Now that he had wealth and miraculous experiences of protection, he was able to return and answer the questions. Avraham was able to show how *Hashem* was always with him, watching over and protecting him.

∞ Working on our Middos

A certain *Talmid Chacham* once approached the *Steipler Gaon*, *zt"l*, and asked if he could *Daven* for his son, whose foot had become swollen. This boy had received an injury while he was on the way to do a *Mitzvah*, and it had become worse and he was in much pain. The *Steipler's* reply surprised him. He said, "If your son got wounded while on the way to do a *Mitzvah*, then I am jealous of him. *Hashem* should help him recover! But you should know that it is a huge *Zechus* to be wounded on the way to do a *Mitzvah*, or while one is actually performing a *Mitzvah*. We find in this in the *Gemara* in *Chulin* (7a), where we see that splitting one's toe by doing a *Mitzvah* brings forgiveness as if he offered a *Korban Olah*. The *Chofetz Chaim*, *zt"l*, would go further and say that if one wounded his entire foot, this is an even greater *Zechus*. Your son's merit is even greater than one who brings a *Korban!*"

∞ B'Kitzur—

Hilchos Bikur Cholim, The Halachos of Visiting the Sick

Relatives and friends who are used to often visiting someone, should go to visit him as soon as they hear of his illness, but those who don't visit him often should not visit him immediately. This is so that they do not bring bad *Mazal* and deter his chances of recovery by getting him called a *Choleh*, a sick person. Therefore, they should not visit him until after three days. (*Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 193:1)

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

Rav Yisroel Salanter, *zt"l*, was often inspired during sunrise to express his great joy at the immense benefits that we get from sunshine. He would joyfully say, "How fortunate we all are! How thankful we must be to *Hashem* our Creator, for His infinite kindness in giving us such wonderful *Brachos!*"

פרשת לך לך תשפ"ה

Parashas Lech Lecha 5785

Compiled by: Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg
Staten Island Z'manim

Erev Shabbos:

Plag HaMinchah: 3:42

Candle Lighting: 4:26

Sh'kiah: 4:44 *לכך זמן ותע* Tzeis: 5:28

Shabbos Kodesh:

Sof Z'man Krias Shema:

Mogen Avraham: 8:32 Gra: 9:08

Sof Z'man Tefillah (Shacharis): 9:59

Chatzos: 11:40 Sh'kiah: 4:43

Havdalah: Tzeis HaKochavim: 5:27

Rabbeinu Tam (72 minutes): 5:56

(some say 6:08)

Next Week: Vayeira

Candle Lighting: 4:20

∞ The Siddur Speaks

Rav Shlomo Levenstein related an incredible story that was told over by Rav Elyahu Brunner: One of the times that I took Rebbetzin Kanievsky, *zt"l*, to visit her father, *HaGaon* Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, *zt"l*, her brother, Rav Avrohom Elyashiv pointed to the floor and told me, "On this floor tile, the *Rebbetzin* stood when she was a single girl, and each and every morning, without fail, she would recite the entire *Sefer Tehilim* from cover to cover!" When we drove back to Bnei Brak, I gathered the courage and I asked the *Rebbetzin*, "What caused you to recite the entire *Tehilim*, every day, without fail?" At first, she tried to avoid answering, but she eventually agreed to tell me. She said, "There was no money in my father's house. My mother, *A"H*, did not desire anything. Her only desire and goal was that my father should be able to learn *Torah* without any disturbances. This was her life's work. I was the oldest daughter, and at that stage, I already understood how to manage *Parnasah*, so I found a job and went to work in order to help support my family. However, naturally, the atmosphere of the workplace had practically no *Torah* atmosphere. Therefore, I decided to wake up very early every morning to stand and say the entire *Tehilim*, as a *Zechus* that the coming day should pass by with complete goodness and joy, and with faithfulness to *Hashem*, in the way I was brought up in my father's home. And that I should not *Chas V'Shalom* be influenced by any negative surroundings that I may face in the working world!"

בזכות לרפואה שלמה: אסתר פרידה בת דינה בתוך שאר חולי

☞ Sterling Character

One should be a person who is happy. (*Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 29:6)

Simcha From Torah

The *Gemara* in *Shabbos* (30b) teaches that *Simchah* opens our hearts to learn *Torah*. The *Mishnah* in *Pirkei Avos* (6:6) lists the forty-eight ways that one can acquire *Torah*, and one of those ways is the trait of *Simchah*. *Medrash Shmuel* teaches that learning *Torah* must be done with *Simchah*, and learning without *Simchah*, as if *Torah* learning is a burden, *Chas V'Shalom*, will lead to one forsaking the *Torah*. However, learning with happiness and singing will increase one's love for learning, since *Torah* and *Simchah* are brothers. Further, *Hashem* loves learning that is done with happiness, and He considers it as if the one learning is His 'friend', so to speak. *Tiferes Yisroel* (*Yachin*, 77) adds that learning *Torah* with *Simchah* helps one retain what he has learned.

Once, the *Gaon* Rav Chaim Volozhiner, *zt"l*, came to Vilna on an *Erev Shabbos*. However, he didn't go to visit his *Rebbe*, the *Gra*, *zt"l*, right away. Instead, he went to the *Mikvah* in honor of *Shabbos*. As he was starting to get himself ready, a messenger came from the *Gra*, who had heard that Rav Chaim had come to town, and wished to see him. Rav Chaim hurried to his *Rebbe's* house, and found him looking terribly ill. The *Gra* had a scarf wrapped around his head, and he was in a terrible mood. Rav Chaim was shocked at the *Gra's* appearance, and he just stood without saying anything, afraid to ask what was going on. The *Gra*, though, when he saw that his student had entered, looked up and asked him to explain a difficult *Gemara* in the *Yerushalmi* that he was struggling to understand. Rav Chaim looked at his *Rebbe* and said, "Who am I to understand and answer that which is unclear in the eyes of the *Gra*?" The *Gra* replied, "The *Pasuk* in *Tehilim* says (119:130), 'Open your mouth and let your words illuminate.' In *Koheles* it says (4:9), 'Two are better than one,' and in *Yeshaya* the *Pasuk* says (41:6), 'Each person should help his friend.'" Rav Chaim looked deeply into the difficult *Yerushalmi*. *Hashem* illuminated his eyes until he started to see a possible answer, but he still didn't fully understand it. He said to himself, "I will say what I think the explanation is, and I will rely on my holy *Rebbe*, through his depth of knowledge, that he will clarify my words and come out with a clear and complete understanding of this *Gemara*." Rav Chaim started to explain the *Gemara*, and as he spoke, the *Gra's* face became transformed, and he was full of joy. He immediately removed the scarf from his head and asked his attendant to bring him some food to eat. This was very surprising to Rav Chaim. He knew that the *Gra* had a longstanding *Minhag* not to eat anything on *Erev Shabbos*. He went to the outer room where the *Gra's* family was, and he asked them, "What is the reason that the *Gra* is suddenly eating on an *Erev Shabbos*? He never does this!" They explained to Rav Chaim that for three days, the *Gra* had not eaten anything, because he was trying to put all his efforts into unravelling the difficult *Yerushalmi*. Now that he understands the *Gemara*, he is allowing himself to eat on *Erev Shabbos*!

Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, *zt"l*, once told of a *Segulah* that can save one from all worries, and he said that this was a proven and true *Segulah*.

Rav Shlomo Zalman said, "One should write on a piece of paper all the kindness that *Hashem* does for him, and when he says *Modim* in *Shemoneh Esrei*, he should remember all those points that he had written down and thank *Hashem* for them. Doing this will free him from all worries!"

Rav Gamliel Rabinowitz related a story in *Tiv HaHashgachah* that someone had shared: I am happy to tell an exciting story that happened to me, and with this, to encourage *Yidden* to be careful not to hurt one another. As a child, others bothered me, but I also bothered others. In my neighborhood, there was a man whose mind was a little weak, and we enjoyed annoying him and hearing his reaction. My mother always warned us that this was a severe *Aveirah* and it was forbidden, but as a child, I did not understand the depth of her words, and at every opportunity, I would bother him to get a funny reaction for me and my friends. Some years went by and I got married, and *Baruch Hashem*, I started a family. However, our third child suffered from breathing problems, and the doctors could not find the source of this, and no treatment helped. With a broken heart, I wrote a *Kvitel* (note) and sent it to the *Keiver* of the *Baal Ha'yeshuos*, Rav Moshe Moznitch, *zt"l*. That night I had a dream and in the dream, the *Tzadik* told me to go to the grave of a certain man in *Eretz Yisroel* and ask for forgiveness. When I woke up, I remembered that this was the man who I had harassed as a child. Immediately, I called my father who lives in *Eretz Yisroel*, and asked for his help in arranging a *Minyan* so that he can *Daven* and ask for forgiveness for me. My father agreed to help me, and after he went, he called me and emotionally told me that exactly on the day when he went with a *Minyan* to the grave, it was this man's *Yahrzeit*! The *Minyan* said *Kaddish* and learned *Mishnayos* for the elevation of his *Neshamah*. The very next day, when my son woke up in the morning, he was completely healthy without any breathing issues at all! *Baruch Hashem*, the problem had gone away! This is the power of *Tefilah* and forgiveness!

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