



# Torah U'Tefilah

*A Collection of Inspiring Insights*

בס"ד

כ"ח ניסן  
28 Nissan

## Besamei HaTorah... Beneath the Surface

By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

מכל האכל אשר יאכל אשר יבוא עליו מים יטמא (יא:לד)

*Of any food that is edible, upon which water comes, shall become impure (11:34)*

Generally, the word "יבא" is spelled without the letter "ו", yet here it is written with the "ו" – "יבוא", why is that? Rav Chaim Kanievski, zt"l, explains that there are seven liquids that make something susceptible to become *Tamei* [impure] – wine, blood, oil, milk, dew, honey and water, as defined in *Maseches Machshirim* (6:4), yet here, only water is mentioned. Therefore, the *Torah* wrote the word "יבוא" with the "ו" (which has a *Gematria*, numerical value, of 6) to teach us that besides water there are six other liquids that can make something susceptible to become *Tamei*. (*Umatok HaOhr*)

## Parshah Thoughts – Ideas and Reflections – Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

The nation had to bring *Korbanos* to atone for the *Eigel* (9:3), as well as for the sale of Yosef (*Toras Kohanim, Shemini* 3). How is the sale of Yosef relevant to the *Aveirah* of the *Eigel*? Rav Meir Simcha of Dvinsk, the *Meshech Chochmah*, explains that the brothers were able to justify selling Yosef because he did not properly rebuke them, and instead, he complained directly to Yaakov. When Chur attempted to rebuke the nation to prevent the *Eigel* and he was killed (*Pirkei D'Rebbi Eliezer*), and this was an indication that proper rebuke would have made no difference. With this claim gone, the *B'nei Yisroel* now had to take responsibility and repent for selling Yosef. When it comes to us, if we get angry that someone did not treat us properly and thereby justify how we behave to them, we should think about our response. Are we reacting to their behavior, or are we just trying to validate acting wrongly to another person for whatever reason?

## Working on our Middos

Rav A. L. Scheinbaum wrote about Rebbetzin Leah Karelitz, z"l, who was the *Rebbetzin* of Rav Nissim Karelitz, zt"l. Rav Nissim commented that his *Rebbetzin* never criticized him or made demands of him whatsoever, and she refused to take him away from his learning. She took great pains to see to it that their home was always filled with *Simchah*. Even during times of challenge like with health issues or economic hardships, her mood did not change. She always presented an aura of joy and satisfaction. It was due to this type of home environment that Rav Nissim was able to grow in *Torah*. Rebbitzin Karelitz once sent her grandson the following letter before Rosh Hashanah: "Every woman seeks to be among the *Mezakei HaRabim*, those who bring merit to the public. This is especially true before the *Yamim Nora'im*, the holiest days of the year. The best advice to achieve this, is to greet every person, including family members and neighbors, *B'Seiver Panim Yafos*, with a happy expression on your face. They will then in turn greet members of their own families, and their friends, *B'Seiver Panim Yafos*. And as a result of this, an entire *Kollel*, husbands of these women, will learn differently and better, as they interact joyfully with one another." Rebbetzin Karelitz taught that the main effort of bringing merits to the public occurs when one person smiles to another. Because this, in effect, will create an atmosphere of calm, joy and contentedness. These feelings are contagious and spread to others, and they set the tone for one to learn *Torah* with the proper frame of mind!

## Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

When the *Steipler Gaon*, zt"l, went to see Rav Menachem Zeimba, zt"l, in order to receive a *Haskamah* for his first *Sefer* that he was publishing, there was a long line of people waiting to see the *Rav*. Although many of the people that were waiting to see Rav Zeimba were conversing with one another, when the *Steipler* joined the line, he opened his *Gemara Masechta Kesuvos*, and he started learning while he waited. By the time it was his turn to see Rav Zeimba, he had learned twenty-two *Blatt* of *Gemara*!

## פרשת שמייני תשפ"ה

Parashas Shemini 5785 Pirkei Avos 1

Shabbos Mevorchim • שבת מברכים

Rosh Chodesh Iyar is on Monday &amp; Tuesday

Compiled by: Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg  
Staten Island Z'manim

Erev Shabbos:

Plag HaMinchah: 6:20

Candle Lighting: 7:28

Sh'kiah: 7:46

Tzeis: 8:31

Shabbos Kodesh:

Sof Z'man Krias Shema:

Mogen Avraham: 8:52 Gra: 9:28

Sof Z'man Tefillah (Shacharis): 10:37

Chatzos: 12:54 Sh'kiah: 7:47

Havdalah: Tzeis HaKochavim: 8:32

Rabbeinu Tam (72 minutes): 9:00

(some say 9:19)

Next Week:

Tazria-Metzorah

Candle Lighting: 7:35

## The Siddur Speaks

Rav Yechiel Michel Feinstein, zt"l, would often say that when a *Yid Davens* sincerely and with all his heart on behalf of another *Yid*, his *Tefilah* reaches directly to the *Kisei HaKavod*, even if he is not necessarily a great *Tzadik*. One of Rav Michel's *Talmidim* once came to give his *Rebbe* the good news that his daughter had become engaged. He told his *Rebbe*, "This *Simchah* is the result of the *Rebbe's Neis*!" He explained that just a month earlier, the father had asked Rav Michel to *Daven* that his daughter find her *Shidduch* quickly, and *Baruch Hashem*, it has now happened! Rav Michel responded by wishing him a *Mazel Tov*, but he said that it was not a *Neis*. He said, "When you came to see me, I saw your pain, and I was very distressed. I then went and put all my heart and soul into the *Tehilim* that I recited for your daughter, and then, I wholeheartedly gave you a *Brachah*. *Hashem* fulfills the request of any Jew who gives a *Brachah* with his whole heart!"

## B'Kitzur- The Halachos of Rosh Chodesh and Kiddush Levanah

On Rosh Chodesh it is forbidden to fast and to eulogize someone, and the *Tefilah* of *Tziduk HaDin* is not recited.

(Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 97:6)

בזכות לרפואה שלמה: אסתר פרידה בת דינה  
בתוך שאר חולי ישראל

Be occupied with learning *Torah*. (*Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 29:6)

### Learning with a Clear Mind

Rav Avraham Pam, זי"ל, on *Pirkei Avos* (4:12, see also *Hagadah Mar'eh Kohein* pg. 227), explains Rebbe Meir, who instructs us to minimize our business and be involved in learning *Torah*. The *Chazon Ish* (*Koveitz Igros*, vol. 1 #38) teaches that the *Mishnah's* directive is applicable to those who work, as well as to those who mainly learn all day. If one wants to be successful in his learning, he should try to limit his mind from being too active, because this will distract him from his *Torah* study. One may sit in front of a *Gemara* for fourteen hours a day, but where is his mind? It is often someplace else. He is busy planning, thinking, calculating, worrying, pondering, and all of this takes away so much of the serenity that is necessary to succeed in learning *Torah*.

Rav Pam said that as much as is humanly possible, one's mind should be free from worry and thoughts that distract from *Limud HaTorah*. A distracted mind, which is very common today, is an enormously destructive thing that will hold one back from advancing in his *Torah* knowledge. The need to know what is going on in the outside world, to be "up to date" on news, politics, or the latest happenings that are going on in the Jewish world, is extremely counterproductive to achieving success in *Torah*. In today's high-tech world, with instantaneous, worldwide communications that allow one to immediately learn about "breaking news" that is taking place on the other side of the globe, it is so easy to be distracted from learning *Torah*, even as one sits at the *Gemara*. The proliferation of cell phones has brought the entire world into the *Beis Medrash*. It is a major component of distractions of the mind, and its bitter fruits are felt wherever they have been allowed to enter.

Rav Pam taught that the great *Talmidei Chachamim* of the previous generations were not distracted by what went on around them. They were completely involved in and devoted to learning *Torah*, and they were able to shut out everything that was going on around them. In today's world, this is infinitely more difficult to do, and it is one of the great challenges of our time.

The *Talmid Chacham* of a century ago was often concerned about where his next meal would come from. He was uncertain about what his *Goyishe* neighbors were planning to do to him. War, disease, hunger, and poverty were constantly present, and they were real sources of distraction. However, he was able to "tune them out" and escape to the serenity and calm of learning *Torah*. Today, thankfully, these particular disturbances have largely diminished. However, there are dozens of new ones that have come in their place, and these are distractions that even the *Chazon Ish*, who lived relatively recently, could not imagine. Despite this, these challenges can be overcome if one seriously desires to grow and achieve greatness in *Torah*!

Rav Gamliel Rabinowitz shared a story that someone had told him, which this man had witnessed: Right before Pesach, a tall man came into our *Kollel*. In one hand he carried a briefcase, and in the other, he held a binder. My curiosity was aroused, and I followed him to see what he was there for. He sat down on a bench by the wall, and he opened the briefcase, which was filled with crisp new bills. At his request, the young men in the *Kollel* began to go over to him, and one after the other, he would write down the name of the young man, and hand him a new 200 *Shekel* bill, to be used for his Pesach expenses. I also approached him and received a gift. I was very happy to get this monetary help, and I thanked him warmly. I waited until after all the distributions, and I noticed a young man sitting in another corner of the *Beis Medrash*, and he had not lifted his eyes from the *Sefer* he was learning the whole time. I felt bad for him to lose out on the money because he was learning, and I went over to him and told him that the man was almost finished handing out money to everyone, but he simply replied, "When one is learning, he does not stop for any treasure in the world!" He then went back to his *Sefer*, and didn't pay attention to anything else that was going on. I was amazed by his devotion, and even more awed by his strength, knowing that he did not have a penny in his pocket. Still, he continued learning as if nothing was happening around him. I waited until after the distribution, when every young man had taken his *Yom Tov* gift and had continued learning. When the wealthy man finished, he noticed that young man sitting on the other side of the *Beis Medrash*, and he asked me who that young man was, and why he hadn't come over to get his Pesach gift? It was remarkable to me, because presently, there were about 180 young men learning in the *Kollel*, and he noticed one person who didn't approach him for a gift. I told him that this certain individual will not stop learning for anything. The man finished, closed up his briefcase, and headed right over to that young man who was still learning. I saw him put 1,000 *Shekel* into the hand of the young man, and wished him a *Chag Samei'ach*. The young man smiled and thanked him with sincerity, and immediately continued learning as if nothing had happened. The wealthy man then left the *Beis Medrash*. When I watched this happen, I got an incredible lesson of what it means to live a life of *Emunah* and trust in *Hashem*. This story took place years ago, but it left an everlasting impression on me. I am now working in business, and I set aside a large portion of my day to learning *Torah*. Because of this episode and the lesson I learned from it, there is nothing in the world that can interrupt my time for learning. Even if people shout at me to open my business to make a large profit, I do not leave the *Beis Medrash* to open my store if I am learning. I saw with my own eyes what *Chazal* have taught, that there is no one who listens and does the will of *Hashem* and loses out because of it!

Rav Ruven Shmelczer shared a great story. A *Shomer Shabbos* hotel in Netanya once had to deal with a difficult dilemma with a couple who wished to make a reservation there. After giving their deposit, the couple contacted the hotel and wanted to pay up front for their stay. The front desk responded that since payment was only due when departing, there was no reason to pay early. The couple then explained that since they'd be continuing their journey on *Shabbos*, when the front desk would be closed, they wanted to pay now to get the matter of payment dealt with. Hearing this, the clerk then apologized and told them that their reservation would have to be cancelled, as the hotel's policy was that they only rent their rooms to those who are *Shomer Shabbos*. Having admitted to plan to drive away on *Shabbos*, they obviously didn't fit the hotel's policy, and they couldn't stay in the hotel. They pleaded with the secretary to reconsider, but she said she couldn't do anything more than let them speak with the hotel manager, Mr. Schechter. Mr. Schechter heard their situation, but he repeated to them that the hotel's policy was to only accept reservations from people who are *Shomer Shabbos*. They told him that this hotel was the only one in the area that they needed to be in, and that they couldn't go anywhere else. Mr. Schechter didn't give in, but he said that he would consult with his *Rav* and get back to them with the final answer. Mr. Schechter then went and sought the guidance of Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, זי"ל. When Mr. Schechter got in to the room to see Rav Elyashiv, it took several minutes before he was able to ask his question. Rav Elyashiv replied with his usual shortly worded response that contained great guidance: "Why should it bother you if they eat *Kosher* for a few days?!" With that Mr. Schechter thanked the *Gadol* and left the room. Rav Elyashiv was saying that being in their hotel would be one of the only times that these Jews would be eating *Kosher*. Who knows what they eat the rest of the time? Now that they would have the chance to eat *Kosher* for a few days, don't push them out and take away that opportunity for them. Let them have a few days of eating *Kosher*, and don't let their *Shabbos* departure disturb that chance. With these few short words, Mr. Schechter took his answer and headed back to the hotel, making an exception for this couple, and allowing them to stay in his hotel. When he called the couple back and explained what had occurred, he could tell from the other side of the line that they were touched beyond just the fact that they were allowed to stay in the hotel. Mr. Schechter asked them what moved them so much, and they went on to explain. They were Holocaust survivors who arrived in Israel with no family and no one to support them and help them get started. Nobody in their new world showed them any interest in doing *Mitzvos*, as they had done when they grew up in Europe, and sadly, they slowly drifted away from their previous dedication to *Yiddishkeit*. Eventually, they had drifted so far that they stopped observing *Torah* and *Mitzvos* altogether. When they heard how Rav Elyashiv valued the *Mitzvos* they would do by eating *Kosher*, caring enough to advise the hotel to go against their policy, it was the first show of support and encouragement they had been given for their *Mitzvos* that they had heard in a long time. They saw how the *Rav* valued their *Mitzvos*, and the empty void they had felt all those years could somehow be filled yet again. When that *Shabbos* finally came, something surprising happened. The staff assumed that they would see the couple packing their bags and making an obvious departure on *Shabbos*, but that didn't happen. Mr. Schechter assumed that they would be seen being *Mechalel Shabbos*, but to the contrary, they were seen observing *Shabbos*, and taking in every aspect of it, absorbing it into themselves and cherishing every moment! Having now experienced the uplifting aura of *Shabbos*, it left them motivated and inspired to start keeping other *Mitzvos*. One *Mitzvah* led to another, until over time, they were observing all the *Mitzvos*, no different than any other *Frum Yid*!

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