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Serene *Emunah* When Business Doesn't Go as Planned

Business Problems Don't Concern the *Ba'al Bitachon*

When Business Is Bad

The *Chovos HaLevavos* now lists another area of serenity and pleasantness that comes to the *ba'al bitachon*. Whereas most businesspeople generally incur aggravation during the course of doing business, the *ba'al bitachon* will not experience any aggravation.

The way that business often works is that the businessman purchases inventory, and when he resells it, he earns a profit. If the merchandise doesn't move, it remains in his warehouses, it causes the owner great losses.

Or suppose that he has managed to *sell* the inventory, but he has many outstanding invoices—the customers aren't paying their bills. This may cause the person terrible aggravation.

Another possibility is that a person has many good business ideas that would earn him lots of money—but he is stuck in bed with an illness, unable to bring his ideas to fruition.

The Ribbono shel Olam Arranges Your Life Better Than You Can

In general, if one of these things happens to a person, he will become very aggravated—because he has toiled in his business without success.

Says the *Chovos HaLevavos*: **If a person is a *ba'al bitachon*, he will have no pain and aggravation** when such things happen.

It may be that he's stuck with merchandise, unable to sell it. It may be that his customers are giving him the runaround regarding payment. It may be that he lies in bed unable to work and bring in *parnassah*. But he will not have any *agmas nefesh* from this.

For he knows that the Creator arranges his affairs better than he can himself—he knows that the Ribbono shel Olam will put in place everything that he needs. If the person works only with his own understanding, he will surely ensure that the merchandise doesn't sit around and that he gets paid. **But the Ribbono shel Olam knows that right now it's better for him that he should *not* be able to sell the merchandise.** He knows that it's better for him *not* to be paid yet! Why is this better?! We don't understand. But the Ribbono shel Olam understands much better—and He looks for our good!

Choosing More Good

[...and the Ribbono shel Olam] chooses better for a person than he can choose for himself—the *ba'al bitachon* is filled with serenity and joy, despite enduring the challenges, because he knows that the Ribbono shel Olam chooses what is best for him, *much better* than anything he could have chosen for himself.

As it says in *Tehillim* דומי לאלוקים דומי (2:26) אך, *for G-d alone my soul awaits silently, from Him comes my salvation*. The word דומי is an expression of silence. A person hopes to Hashem in silence because ממנו תקותי *from Him comes my salvation*. I don't understand anything, except for two things: 1) The Ribbono shel Olam has arranged my affairs in this precise way. 2) the Ribbono shel Olam desires my good even more than I myself do, and He can do anything!

If so, it's clear that **my merchandise didn't get stuck here for no reason**. There's no reason to become aggravated, because there *is* a reason the Ribbono shel Olam arranged it this way. **I can enjoy my life in serenity**, despite going through these challenges.

Business Brings Bothers

These scenarios that the *Chovos HaLevavos* brings here are obviously just a few examples, which are meant to bring out the general point that business very often brings with it some aggravation. But this applies not only to the business owner, but also to those who work as employees. They also need much *bitachon* not to have *agmas nefesh*.

But it is most common for those who deal in business—for there are so many possibilities for failure and risk inherent in commercial endeavors. First, he must purchase much inventory, and because he doesn't have the funds handy, he must borrow large sums of money in the hopes that he'll be able to sell. Sometimes, a person has already invested in a product, but it turned out that others have already done the same, and now he must sell the product at a much lower price than he anticipated. And so, there are so many possibilities for failure and aggravation when engaging in business.

The *Ba'al Bitachon* Is Never a *Shlimazel*

Says the *Chovos HaLevavos*: The *ba'al bitachon* will never have such worries and aggravation, because he will always remember that the Ribbono shel Olam is guiding him every step of the way, and He arranges his situation far better than he himself could. He chooses much better for me than anything I could fathom.

"But," one will say, "look at the other guy who is so successful; I am a *shlimazel*...." No! You're no *shlimazel*! The Ribbono shel Olam is designing your life in the best way for *you*. The other guy who has seen wild success in the same industry as you isn't the only *בן יחיד* to Hashem—so are *you*! But the Ribbono shel Olam knows that this is what is good for you at this moment.

A Weak Economy Is the Best Thing for *Me*

The same applies when the entire economy is suffering, and the business world is going through rough times. The *ba'al bitachon* remains serene through all the stresses—because he knows that everything is being ordained with a precise *Hashgachah*, and it is ordained for *him* to struggle with *parnassah* at this moment.

This *yesod* is applicable to hundreds, or thousands, of scenarios that affect businesspeople. The *ba'al bitachon* will spare himself much aggravation, thanks to his *emunah* that the Ribbono shel Olam is running his life with extraordinary compassion and kindness.

Don't Blame Yourself for Failed Investments

A Silly and Irresponsible Business Decision

The *Chovos HaLevavos* begins with an example of a person who purchased inventory, but he can't move it. The *ba'al bitachon* will, however, remain calm and serene—knowing that the Ribbono shel Olam ordained it all for his good.

One may ask, **why can't it be that this person simply made a bad business decision to purchase more inventory than he needed?** Perhaps he was hasty and impulsive, thinking that he's about to strike it rich... "I will invest and buy lots of merchandise and turn a quick profit."

Often, he was even warned beforehand: Don't do it. You must be careful with such an investment, because it can go bad, he was told. But this person was smarter than everyone, and he didn't listen. Now he is stuck with this inventory. **How can this person have *bitachon* and think that it was all ordained from Above? He did it to himself!** Now, he's reaping the fruits of his bad and hasty decision.... In such a case, it is difficult to remain calm with *bitachon*, because **this person blames himself for his bad decision.**

What to Do When We're at Fault

This dilemma bothers many people who invest badly in a certain project or product, and they later blame themselves. **"Where were my brains?"** they lament. "Why didn't I listen to older and wiser people who warned me to stay away from that investment? I did this to myself with my own two hands!"

And the rule is that when we're talking about things that aren't in our

hands, it is much easier to have *bitachon* and believe that it's from Hashem. After all, it's very clearly from Above... because we had nothing to do with it. Even then, it's not always so easy... but it's so much harder when we did it with our own two hands. How can we have proper *bitachon* in such a case?

Your Actions Have Nothing to Do with the End Results

The first thing we must know is that this would be a fair concern—if the end results had *anything* to do with the person's actions.

That is, **if a person's success were connected to the actions that he took, and failure would also be connected to a person's actions**, then this concern would be legitimate. "I made a bad decision, and this was the result."

(Sometimes, it is proper to reflect on the results of our actions. For example, a father knows that it's improper to yell at his son for something he did, because the child isn't in the frame of mind to accept criticism. But this father lost himself and gave the child a scolding to remember.... But upon reflection, he realizes that it was the wrong thing to do. Because the previous time, he "lost the child" for an hour, and this time, he lost him for three days. He doesn't want to look his father in the face; the father has severed his connection with the child. The father realizes that his action was a big mistake and brought about a terrible outcome.)

But when it comes to business and *parnassah*, **there's never such a concept as your actions bringing about a result**. There's *never* a case when a person could say, "If I remained stuck with inventory, it is due to *my* rash decision to buy it." When it comes to money, there simply is no such thing!

Same Actions—Different Outcome

When it comes to business and money, results have no connection to the actions that a person took—and we see this clearly every day. Two people do the very same thing with wildly different outcomes. One per-

son was very successful and became wealthy, while the second person failed miserably—and there is nothing that we can point to where the second person went wrong.

We believe with *emunah* that outcomes aren't based on our actions, but we also see it with clarity. How many times does a person invest *hishtadlus* into one area, and the successful outcome comes from a completely different corner. This is how the Ribbono shel Olam designed our world; a person does his part, and the Ribbono shel Olam sends the results, unconnected to the precise actions that he took.

Your Actions Have Nothing to Do with the Situation

Thus, one can never make the *cheshbon* that his business failure is due to his bad decision. This is incorrect. It may very well be that you didn't make any mistakes at all, yet you nevertheless failed, **because this is what the Ribbono shel Olam wants**, and this is the best thing for you.

It's true that we should take seriously the advice of older and wiser people, and it may be that we have made mistakes. Perhaps we should have inquired more or davened more. But don't conclude that *because* the results weren't as we would have liked, it automatically means that we were mistaken. We shouldn't link the two.

The first thing is for a person to calm himself: I made the decision according to the information that I had at the time. And if that information was that this wasn't an overly risky move, then the fact that it failed *must be* that this is the *ratzon Hashem* for my own good.

Reasonable Risk

We see this in so many situations. People invest money in secure investments, with a very rational *cheshbon*, and still, it ends in failure—not because of anything they did or didn't do, but because this is the *ratzon Hashem*.

Suppose a *Yid* invested a few million dollars into a property where he can build many homes. There's some risk, but this person inquires about

the home prices and the demand for homes in this area, and the experts tell him that this is a rational investment.

But after purchasing the lot, the laws changed, and now he's unable to develop the area. This happens all the time. **Can we fault him for making a bad investment?** Should he have stayed home and done nothing? **Of course not!** He made a proper and rational business move. He took a risk, but *every* investment has *some* risk. It was within normal and reasonable actions; the results have nothing to do with him.

Don't Be Aggravated by Failed Investments

The same can happen when a person buys a product with the intention of selling it for a profit. But later things changed, and the item couldn't be sold, or he couldn't get his hands on it due to government bureaucracy. This person took a reasonable risk according to the information he had at the time—only in *Shamayim* it was ordained for a different outcome.

This is the first rule that we must keep in mind: In most cases, when a person gets stuck with merchandise that he can't move, **he shouldn't become aggravated by it**, and he shouldn't agonize that he should have done differently. At the time, you made a very reasonable decision—even if others would not have undertaken this risk—**so long as it was a normal investment, you fulfilled your mission of *hishtadlus*.**

You engaged in the pursuit of *parnassah* as we are obligated to do. Proof of this is that your friend made the same investment and made out very well, while you lost everything—**because this was the *ratzon Hashem***. You can and must have full *bitachon* that the Ribbono shel Olam is doing everything for your good.

When Your *Sechel* Is Confiscated

Sometimes, there is a situation wherein a person knows the truth; he really messed up... he made a really foolish move. He invested without thinking things through, and he didn't investigate it enough. His older friend tells him, "I told you that it wouldn't work. You're young and

brash... you wanted to make a quick buck.... I warned you that you should stay away from such things.”

Even in such cases, **it’s very possible that the person didn’t have a choice in the matter.** From Above, they took away his clarity and *sechel* for that moment, because this outcome was *bashert* for him. It was ordained that he *should* do this move, against all logic and reason, and thereby lose his money.

How often do we see seasoned and experienced businessmen with decades of business experience who always think things through before they make a move... and in one case they cannot get over how foolish they were. “This is so out of character for me,” they agonize. “Where was my *sechel*?... I am so not the type to do such a brash business move.”

This person must take into account that yes, often the Ribbono shel Olam removes a person’s clarity of thought and *sechel* for a short time, because this is what must happen—**for his good.** The *ba’al bitachon* will always remain calm, even when he knows that he made a foolish mistake, for he knows that he was led from Above on this path.

The Proper Approach When We *Did* Make a Brash Move

Every Action Is Either a Mitzvah or an *Aveirah*

What happens when a person knows in his heart that he can’t rely on any of the above *cheshbonos*? He knew at the time that it was reckless, his *sechel* wasn’t taken away... **he allowed his emotions to get the better of him.** He chose not to use logic, and he didn’t daven to Hashem to guide him on the proper path. **He closed his eyes to the obvious signs that Hashem sent his way.** He was too smart for his own good. “I *will* succeed.... I will figure this out,” he thought.

In such a case, a person must remember what the *Chovos HaLevavos* teaches us in *Sha’ar Avodas HaElokim* (Chapter 4): Every single thing a

person does on this earth is either a mitzvah or an *aveirah*—there is no neutral territory. Before every move that a person does, he must reflect: **Is this the ratzon Hashem or is it not the ratzon Hashem?** He must speak about the matter to the Ribbono shel Olam, and daven that he should be led on the proper path. He must meditate on what signs he may be receiving from Above on whether he should be doing this.

Small Sins

Now, if a person knows in his heart that he shouldn't be borrowing so much money, because he is at risk of not being able to pay it back... he took on enormous debt because he wanted to make a quick buck... without *tefillah*, without reflection—simply because he believed in his own abilities—then **this move was clearly not the ratzon Hashem.**

This person can conclude the truth: Had I davened better on that day, had I properly meditated on thoughts of *bitachon*, had I recited *Parashas HaMahn* and relied upon Hashem, **I would likely not have done this.** Thus, if his venture failed due to his neglect in these areas, then he did something contrary to *ratzon Hashem*.

A person must know that when it comes to *aveiros*, there are various levels. There are very severe *aveiros*, and there are also “lighter *aveiros*.”—such as taking actions that are contrary to the desires of the Ribbono shel Olam. This action of reckless and impulsive *hishtadlus* was a type of *aveirah*.

Sins of Lacking *Bitachon*

When a person internalizes the fact that he engaged in a “light *aveirah*” by going against the *ratzon Hashem*, he should understand that **this is rooted in a lack of *bitachon*.**

So says Rebbe Baruch of Kossov in his *sefer Amud HaAvodah* (*Derush HaBitachon*, os 24): **The fulfillment of all mitzvos is dependent on one's level of *emunah*.** A person who has proper *emunah* and *bitachon* will always execute the *ratzon Hashem*. It will never occur to him that he doesn't have the money or the wherewithal to fulfill the mitzvah—be-

cause he trusts that Hashem will provide him with the means to fulfill His will.

With this teaching, the *Amud HaAvodah* explains the words of Chazal: *בא חבקות והעמידן על אחת—וצדיק באמונתו יחיה*, *Chavakuk established that all mitzvos are really rooted in the one mitzvah of emunah* (Makkos 24a). If a Yid has proper *emunah*, he will automatically fulfill all the mitzvos. The *ba'al bitachon* is never prevented from doing the *ratzon Hashem*—for he has a clear and firm *emunah* and *bitachon*. Nothing can hold him back.

When a person finds himself in a situation in which he has invested unwisely in a way that is contrary to the will of Hashem, he should recognize the foolishness of his ways. The fact that he went against norms and the advice of wise people was a type of *aveirah*, because he didn't have the proper *emunah* and *bitachon*—he didn't daven properly to Hashem.

Hashem Is Good—Without Exceptions

Rather than view his actions as foolishness or because he is a *shlimazel*, he should admit that his actions touched on an *aveirah*. In this way, the person will be able to remind himself that, despite his errors, the Ribbono shel Olam is *הטוב ומטיב לרעים ולטובים*, *He is good and does good to the bad and to the good*. It is true that you erred, but you didn't lose the assurance that Hashem is good to everyone! The Ribbono shel Olam will continue to prepare for you what is best for you, better than anything you can fathom. Even *after* you have behaved foolishly, and even *after* you didn't have sufficient *emunah*.

The Ribbono shel Olam turns over the world so that no one will ever be cast away from Him—that even those who have *R"l* sinned in the worst way will still have a way to return to Him. There are thousands of stories and instances in which *Yidden* have found their way back after committing the worst of the worst, *R"l*, because the Ribbono shel Olam has turned over the world for him to do *teshuvah*.... And **you think that the Ribbono shel Olam will take His eye off you?!** That He would cease being kind to you because you were foolish for a moment?

The Ribbono shel Olam is מְסִיב לרעים ולטובים—especially when a person is a tight spot, when he's suffering with money troubles. And when a person is humble and he wishes to return with simple and sincere *emunah*, the Ribbono shel Olam will surely accept him with open arms.

Bitachon Even When I'm Undeserving

The Ropshitzer Rav (*Zera Kodesh*, fifth night of Chanukah) teaches us that a person can never think: If I were a tzaddik, I could indeed have proper *bitachon* that Hashem won't abandon me—because He will repay me for my good deeds. But I know myself... I know that I am undeserving... how can I trust that the Ribbono shel Olam will be good to me, beyond what I deserve?

Says the *Zera Kodesh*: This is the *yetzer hara* talking! It is not true. The Ribbono shel Olam is מְסִיב לרעים ולטובים. He is טוב ה' לכל, *Hashem is good to all!* A person must internalize and connect with this *middah* of *bitachon*—believing that Hashem is good and will do good for him, regardless of his deeds and actions.

A *Yid* must believe that the Ribbono shel Olam always does what is best for him. It is not the place to start blaming himself... taking blame for the outcomes. No! I may have done an *aveirah*, but now I wish to return to the Ribbono shel Olam, and He will surely help me, even if I was wrong.

We find this concept regarding Avraham Avinu. When he was promised children and the land of Eretz Yisrael, he considered it an undeserved good—but he nevertheless believed and trusted. He believed that Hashem would be good to him even if he didn't deserve it—and this is what we must all do.

I May Have Been Foolish, But Everything Is for My Good

Thus, when a person finds himself in a situation in which he lost money on a venture, he should remember that one of two things happened

here: Either he did make the right investment decision consistent with the rules of *bitachon* and *hishtadlus*, and he remains secure in his *bitachon* that the Ribbono shel Olam is doing what is best for him. He is filled with joy and thanks, and he continues to daven for the future.

Or, he was indeed foolish and brash. But **he *still* remains filled with *bitachon***. He admits his mistake, **but he is confident that this is not a reason for the Ribbono shel Olam to abandon him, *chas v'shalom***. The Ribbono shel Olam continues to look for our good, even if we made a mistake.

Keeping Close

Sometimes there's a situation in which a person remains obstinate and stubborn... he digs in and distances himself from the Ribbono shel Olam. The *Chovos HaLevavos* later (*Perek 4*) tells us that such a person cannot possibly have *bitachon*, because he refuses to come close to the Ribbono shel Olam. But we're talking about a person who recognizes his mistake... that **what he thought was a *business* mistake was really an *emunah* and *bitachon* mistake**, and he seeks to correct this with humility and *bittul*. Such a person will surely be drawn close to the Ribbono shel Olam, and He will help him with the greatest good, more than a person can fathom.

Thus, we reiterate the teaching of the *Chovos HaLevavos* that when a person loses money in business or he's otherwise unsuccessful with money, he should remain deeply calm, knowing that our salvation comes only from Hashem and our hopes must be pinned solely on Him. And even when a person feels that he caused these troubles to himself with his own bare hands, he can rest assured in his *bitachon*—because the Ribbono shel Olam will never abandon him!



The *Da'as* That We Take from Pesach for the Entire Year

What Are We Taking with Us from the Yom Tov?

The Question That Doesn't Have an Adequate Answer

There's an age-old question: When people go on vacation, what do they accomplish by it?

Later, when people return home, all their problems are waiting for them right where they left them—they didn't miraculously disappear.

And sometimes, if we leave the problems to fester, they only grow and accumulate. When the person returns from vacation, he will find his water and electricity cut off because he didn't pay his bills.... His situation only *worsened* because of his vacation. Thus, what's the purpose of running away?

This question doesn't really have an answer. Sometimes, vacation is indeed counterproductive and can exacerbate the situation. It only temporarily calms the person.

Proceeding from Yom Tov

When it comes to the *heilige* Yamim Tovim that the Ribbono shel Olam has given us, when a person disconnects from everything... the whole world stops for him. The week before Yom Tov, you can't even talk to this person; everything is postponed, and he will tell you, "We'll speak after Yom Tov."

But now comes the dreaded “after Yom Tov,” and all the problems and dilemmas are right where we left them, and they’ve perhaps even gotten worse.

There’s the *bachur* who needs a new yeshivah, since he was told that he can’t return the following *zeman*; the bills have accumulated; an array of business affairs must be straightened out... everything is back to the way it was—and it’s a difficult reality that hits the person hard, descending as he is from the high of Yom Tov. He must now contend with the realities and challenges of *Olam HaZeh*.

One may ask: What was the point of this exercise? Of course, we fulfilled so many important mitzvos, but how do we proceed from an elevated Yom Tov back into our mundane lives?

Freshening Up

The answer to this can be given in a very simple way: There are two ways in which a person may—even in the materialistic world, using a wise approach—abandon his problems or postpone them:

The first situation is when it’s late at night, and he says, “Let’s stop here and pick this up tomorrow morning.” And we ask him, “What are you thinking? Do you think your problems will vanish if you go to sleep now?!”

Everyone understands that this is an unfair question—because this man is exhausted, his mind isn’t working properly, and he doesn’t have the *kochos* to concentrate properly. Tomorrow he will wake up refreshed, and he’ll be able to tackle the issues far better.

The Ribbono shel Olam grants us renewed strength in the morning, and He removes sleep from our eyes. Everything is different following a good rest. The same goes for a person attempting to learn a *sugya* when his eyes are closing. When he wakes in the morning, his learning will go so much more smoothly and easier, and the same applies to a person seeking to build a *succah* on an empty stomach; when he takes a moment to have a bite, his entire project will be so much easier.

And so, taking a break is very often a good idea, and it is always encouraged to take a breather.

Improving Our Skills

The second instance in which it's encouraged to postpone our issues and problems is for the purpose of improving and learning new skills and strategies. A person may stop what he's doing **in order to learn how to do it better**.

One example of this is a businessman who leaves his work behind for a day or two to attend a seminar or convention where he will meet with experts from around the globe. They will share strategies for efficiency, give advice on how to avoid mistakes, and provide practical advice from people who have been in this field for decades.

He *will* miss work for two days – but it's well worth it, because he will return to work completely refreshed, armed with strategies and skills that he hadn't had before. In the words of the Gemara (*Menachos* 99a) ביטולה של תורה זו קיומה, *the neglect of Torah learning is its preservation*. Sometimes we must take measures that will preserve Torah for the future, even at the cost of our Torah itself.

The Vitality That the Neshamah Receives from a Yom Tov

The *heilige* Yamim Tovim that we were gifted from Hashem have both elements.

First, a *Yid* rests up over Yom Tov. Why does a person wake up refreshed in the morning? Because when a person goes to sleep, the *neshamah*, which had spent too much time on *Olam HaZeh*, ascends closer to the Ribbono shel Olam. **There, it is in an exalted state. It has returned to the Ribbono shel Olam!** And when a person wakes in the morning, his *neshamah* is coming from a good place, it comes from *Olam HaBa*. Of course, he is able to learn and daven better.

The same transpires every Yom Tov: The *neshamah* becomes re-

freshed, even when we're not sleeping. We ascend to an exalted place, and we return with renewed strength.

The Brilliant *Da'as* We Receive on Yom Tov

Second, there are knowledge and skills that we learn on Yom Tov—in a way that only a Yom Tov can teach us! **The Ribbono shel Olam illuminates our *neshamah* with so much knowledge and understanding of Torah**—as we supplicate so many times over Yom ותן חלקינו בתורתך, voT וטהר לבינו לעבדך באמת.

In addition to all the mitzvos that we perform over Yom Tov, which infuse our minds with דעת of Hashem—we undergo a seminar with numerous “presentations.” There's a course on how to purge the *chametz* from our hearts, how we can shake off the impurities by having *charatah*, erasing all the undesirable influences that have attached themselves to the *neshamah*. This was the preparation for Yom Tov.

Later, the *neshamos* emerge from the *kelipah*. We experienced a holy night of סיפור יציאת מצרים, which beamed in a new appreciation that a *Yid* is a wholly different creation in This World—and שביעי של פסח featured its own lessons and *yesodos* in *emunah* in Hashem.

On Yom Tov We Receive the Keys to Solve Our Problems

Finding the Solution

After a Yom Tov, a *Yid* finds that it is time to return to all the problems that he has postponed, but **he is returning to his life with entirely new *kochos*.**

It is comparable to a person who stands at the entrance to a building, but the door is locked. He tries one way and then another. He tries to push the door, to ring the bell, but nothing works—and he begins to walk away.

Says his friend, “Where are you going? You think that if you will go away the door will open by itself?!” But he answers, “**No, I went to get the keys.** Previously, I thought I could get in without them, but now I see that I can’t get in without keys, and so I went to retrieve them.”

The Challenges Remain—But We Now Have the Keys

After an exalted Yom Tov, a *Yid* comes back to his problems with keys in hand. That doesn’t mean that the door is no longer here—the *yetzer hara*, and bad habits, and obstacles and challenges have not vanished. Some failures will continue to be a part of life, and a person will still need to contend with negative habits, **but we have now been given the keys to open the door!**

The Ribbono shel Olam gave us Yamim Tovim, and He taught us what to do in the case of a failure. The world remained what it is, even after Yom Tov. Everything is the same, and the problems remain the same... and sometimes there are even more problems. But the Ribbono shel Olam has taught the person how to deal with them and what he should do about them. *Now*, it is bright and clear!

The Trapped Dove

Following Yom Tov, we take along the holy verses of *Shir HaShirim* that we have internalized. When the *pasuk* in *Shir HaShirim* wishes to convey what the *Yidden* experienced at the Yam Suf, it tells us the prophecy of Shlomo HaMelech: יונתי בחגי הסלע בסתר המדרגה הראיני את מראיך, *O My dove, trapped in the clefts of the rock, show me your prayerful gaze, let Me hear your supplicating voice, for your voice is sweet and your countenance comely* (*Shir HaShirim* 2:14).

Says Rashi that when the *Yidden* were trapped at the shore of the Yam Suf with nowhere to go, they were likened to a dove that seeks to escape the clutches of the hawk. A dove is a very soft bird, and the hawk is an aggressive predator. The dove fears that he will be consumed by the hawk, and so he escapes to the niches within the rock, where the hawk cannot pursue him.

But entering the rock, he is surprised to find a venomous snake that threatens to poison him. Now he's faced with a dilemma: If he goes in, he may be killed by the snake, and if he goes out, he will be consumed by the hawk. This is the situation in which Klal Yisrael found itself at the brink of the water.

Concludes Rashi: In that moment, the Ribbono shel Olam said: הראיני את מראיך—**show me your deeds... to whom do you turn in dire times?**

The Finest *Tefillah* Is When a *Yid* Is Completely Reliant on Hashem

The Ribbono shel Olam says to the Jewish People: Do you know what I loved the most? When you davened to Me then. השמיעיני את קוליך, *let Me hear your supplicating voice*. Which voice? **The voice of a *Yid* who davens when he no recourse... no way forward.** Whichever way he goes, he will lose out—it seems. It is this *tefillah* about which Hashem says כי קולך נאווה, *for your voice is sweet and your countenance comely*. This is the sweetest and most beautiful *tefillah*—because **it was then that you relied upon the Ribbono shel Olam with completeness.**

When a *Yid* davens to the Ribbono shel Olam in such a state, he understands that this is the very best place to be: under the protection of the Ribbono shel Olam! If so, he thinks to himself, **of course it was great that I postponed my problems until after Yom Tov!** *Before* Yom Tov came, he thought that he could figure it all out on his own. He'll do... he'll call... he'll turn things over. But then comes after Yom Tov, and he realizes that—to the contrary—**over Yom Tov, he became a better *Yid*!**

You Heard Their Cry

This *Yid* understands well that: My *neshamah* once again made the exodus from the *kelipah*.... I lived through a שבועי של פסח in which we experienced ואת זעקתם שמעת על ים סוף, *and You heard their cry at the Yam Suf*. Hashem said; Your cries are tremendous—and now you must go forward!

But, you will say, I don't see how I will be helped! The answer is, go

forward and do what you must. Do what you are told by Hashem, without knowing how this will bring salvation. Go into the water because this is what the Ribbono shel Olam commanded you to do. The salvation will come. The Ribbono shel Olam will take care of you!

How Bright Life Is for a Yom Tov *Yid*

When a *Yid* approaches his problems with this Yom Tov attitude, which he acquired over Yom Tov, everything is illuminated before him. He is filled with joy, because he is truly reliant on the Ribbono shel Olam!

He *enjoys* his situation, and he thanks the Ribbono shel Olam even though he doesn't see a solution—because he understands that this means “I don't have anyone to rely upon but Hashem!” **Ah, this is the best situation in which a *Yid* can find himself! Let's dance with joy!**

After Yom Tov, a *Yid* returns to face the dreaded Monday morning that everyone warned him about. He returns to the papers, to the bills, to the debts, to the phone calls, and so forth. But we tell him: **“Don't come back with your old *Olam HaZeh* attitude, your pre-Yom Tov approach! Approach your problems with a new understanding that you have acquired over Yom Tov. Pause before trying to resolve an issue and send up a warm prayer to the Ribbono shel Olam. Rely upon Him—only He can help you!”**

Turning Weekdays into Yom Tov

This is the *avodah* of post-Yom Tov. As the *pasuk* says, אָסְרוּ חֵג בַּעֲבוּתֵימָם, *bind the Yom Tov with rope*. What should you tether the Yom Tov to? Bind it to all your problems! **Take the Yom Tov and bring it into your problems now!**

The Ribbono shel Olam מְבַדִּיל בֵּין קוֹדֶשׁ לַחֹל, *separates between the holy and the mundane*, because otherwise a person would bring his mundane problems into Yom Tov, and he wouldn't be able to feel the pleasure of Yom Tov. Says the Ribbono shel Olam: **For this reason, I am making a separation. Don't bring your mundane concerns into the holy... but**

when you return to the mundane, *of course*, you should bring as much of the holiness along with you as you can! From now on, begin to live your *Olam HaZeh* differently.

The Ribbono shel Olam has a unique task for each of us—according to what we must rectify.

One person must figure out his *shalom bayis*, while another must tend to *chinuch* issues for his children. A third person struggles with financial matters, while another person has other difficulties. Everyone must endure something—**but endure it with the Yom Tov attitude, with the illuminations of Yom Tov.**

It isn't merely a new understanding that we have acquired over Yom Tov—it is a **special power and ability that the neshamah has acquired through the aura of the Yom Tov.** Just as a person receives renewed strength after resting up, your *neshamah*—which just spent a week in *Olam HaBa*—**received light and clarity.**

Begin living with this light and clarity throughout the entire year!

