



KUNTRES

HAVINEINI



**פרשת
פנחס**

תשפ"ה

YEAR 3

ISSUE 132



SHIURIM OF

HARAV SHIMON
SPITZER SHLIT"A





**HAVINEINI
HOTLINE**

US - 718.686.8300

E"Y - 072.257.7726

UK - 0204.586.2115

BE - 03.300.0223

Also available on:



Sign up to receive daily shiurim
and weekly publications or to
send feedback:

Tel: 718.387.1122

Email: info@machonhavineini.com



.....

Contents

.....

Shiurim in Chovos HaLevavos, Sha'ar haBitachon Shiur 56 Part 1

The Ba'al Bitachon Hears the Compassionate Call of Hashem5

The Extraordinary Kindness of Heavenly Messages

Four Differences Between Wisdom and *Bitachon* ❖ A System of Reminders ❖ Heaven and Earth Send Messages ❖ The Greatest Compassion ❖ Getting the Message in Time ❖ Don't Wait for Repeat Messages

Repenting for Our Lack of *Emunah*

The Difficulty of Introspection ❖ An Improper Understanding ❖ Confused Thoughts ❖ A Reminder That You're Not the Boss ❖ We All Need *Chizuk* for Complete *Emunah* ❖ Finding the Measure ❖ "*Bittul Torah*" vs. Strengthening *Emunah* ❖ As Long as We're on This Earth

Once We Accept *Yissurim*, There's No Need to Suffer

"Life Wisdom" Makes us Forget the Truth ❖ A *Chinuch* Issue ❖ The Right Way to Calmness ❖ Splitting the Sea to Hear the Truth ❖ The Greatest Gift ❖ If We Get the Message, We Rid Ourselves of Suffering

Attaining *Kedushas Eretz Yisrael* Through Our Covenant with Hashem.....17

The Pain of the *Shechinah* in *Galus*

The Two Forces of Evil Are the Same ❖ One Step for Another ❖
The *Shechinah's* Pain ❖ The Power of Prayer ❖ Empathizing with
the Ribbono shel Olam

Drawing Joy and Strength From The *Bris* With Hashem

The Source of True Pleasure ❖ Drawing Strength from the
Covenant ❖ No One Is Ever Cast Away

Every *Yid* Will Leave *Galus*

Never Despair ❖ Thanking Toward the Future ❖ *Kedushah* Is for
Everyone ❖ Joy Amid Battle

The Ba'al Bitachon Hears the Compassionate Call of Hashem

The Extraordinary Kindness of Heavenly Messages

Four Differences Between Wisdom and *Bitachon*

Previously, we have discussed the difference between two people—both of whom distract themselves from their problems. Both accept their situation and don't fight it. But while one person does so out of wisdom and experience—he understands that on a practical level it doesn't pay to fight reality—the second person does the same thing **because of his *emunah* and *bitachon***; he truly relies on the Ribbono shel Olam, and he remembers that the Ribbono shel Olam is the One Who placed him into this situation, and it is thus certainly good for him.

We have enumerated four differences between a person who accepts his situation due to wisdom, and one who does so because of his *emunah* in Hashem:

1. Fulfilling the mitzvah of *emunah*: A *Yid* who accepts his lot because of his *emunah* thus fulfills a מצוות עשה דאורייתא of *emunah*, while the first person, who sees distraction and diversion as the easier and more practical route, may be wise, but he isn't fulfilling any mitzvah.
2. Attaining our *tachlis*: A person came to This World to “**recognize his Creator amid the darkness of This World,**” and when a *Yid* lives with *emunah*, he is attaining his purpose. **One who lives with**

חיים חכמת will have an easier life, but he isn't coming closer to his *tachlis*.

3. Reaping the reward of *bitachon*: **The *ba'al bitachon* will receive his reward in This World, and that reward is that he will merit even more *bitachon* and serenity.** The Brisker Rav said that the reward for *bitachon* is *even more bitachon*! That is, this *Yid* will be granted the vessels and the ability to trust in Hashem even when he encounters difficulties that touch him in the deepest place. However, one who simply distracts himself from wisdom will not merit the reward of *bitachon*. And thus, when he encounters deeper difficulties, he won't succeed in remaining calm.
4. Meriting new *shefa*: **A *Yid* who is *davuk* in Hashem with *emunah* will merit a new flow of *shefa* from conduits that didn't exist previously**—as the *pasuk* assures us, והבטח בה' יסובבנו, the Ribbono shel Olam gives special השפעות to those who trust in Him and rely upon Him. But this promise doesn't extend to those who simply distract themselves because that's what's easiest.

A System of Reminders

But then there's a **fifth point**, which requires a special discussion to really emphasize the difference between the two paths.

The *Zohar HaKadosh* (*Parashas Vayikra*) tells us that the Ribbono shel Olam designed the world in such a way that He makes us aware of our transgressions. He has great kindness and compassion for us, as well as a desire for us to succeed in This World and accomplish what we need to here. He doesn't want us to find out that we went wrong only after we arrive in the Next World.

For this reason, He has designed the Creation so that **all happenings that transpire are essentially reminders to a person to conduct himself in the right way.** This is hinted at in the words חטא אשר חטאתו אליו חטאתו, *if the sin that he committed becomes known to him* (*Vayikra* 4:28)—i.e., the sins of a person become known to him through the things that happen to him over his lifetime.

Heaven and Earth Send Messages

The *Zohar HaKadosh* cites the *pasuk* יגלו שמים עונו וארץ מתקוממה לו *the heavens will reveal his sin; and the land will rise up against him* (Iyov 20:27). Suffering will come to a person in order to awaken him regarding his *aveiros*. The *Middas HaDin* will descend from the heavens with a message from the Ribbono shel Olam **to notify the person that what he did wasn't right**, so he can rectify it and become closer to the Ribbono shel Olam.

The same applies to ארץ מתקוממה לו *the land rises up against him*; he plants in the ground, but he receives no yield, etc. The **earth is performing a mission to awaken the person to do *teshuvah*** and return to the proper path.

The Greatest Compassion

This is also essentially the idea of הבא ליטהר מסעיין אותו *one who wishes to purify himself is assisted from Above*. One of the ways a person is assisted is when **the Ribbono shel Olam prevents him from straying too far**. When he fails or strays, he is immediately notified of his mistake.

This is the greatest compassion that Hashem has for us. **There is such mercy and love within this that we can't even fathom it!** If not for these reminders, a person could go through his entire life not even knowing that he's straying and stumbling, and only later will he look back with regret and pain: *Why didn't they alert me to this?*

Imagine that a person is driving a car in an unfamiliar neighborhood, and he makes a left instead of a right turn—and someone only tells him two hours later that he made a wrong turn. Now his trip will take him four hours longer than intended! **If someone had alerted him right away, he would have spared himself so much time and aggravation.** This is a tremendous רחמנות that the Ribbono shel Olam has for us by letting us know when we have strayed.

Getting the Message in Time

According to this, when a person finds himself in a situation where

things don't go as he would have wanted, he should understand that the Ribbono shel Olam is sending him a message, reminding him to turn around.

If a *Yid* lives with *emunah*, he takes the message in the spirit in which it was meant. He gets the message, and he learns something from it—thereby avoiding repeat messages that may sometimes be even more painful.

However, if a person simply draws on חכמת חיים, *wisdom and experience*, he will never introspect. His attitude is: “I won't destroy my life over a failure or a disappointment. I will abandon the dreams and aspirations that I had... it simply doesn't pay.” This person will indeed be calmer, but **he isn't getting the message that was sent to him from Above**. If so, he may need to receive a stronger message... and so forth.

Don't Wait for Repeat Messages

The *ba'al bitachon* submits to Hashem's will, and he allows himself to be led from Above. He knows that everything that happens is with a precise השגחה פרטית and that it is for his good. At the same time, he introspects: **What does Hashem want from me? Why did I get this stern message?** Another person who simply distracts himself is just that—distracted. He doesn't hear any message, because he does everything not to think about the problem.

Chazal tell us in the *Midrash* that this is the way it worked regarding the נגעים, *leprosy*. At first, only the home was stricken. If the person didn't get the message, then the נגע appeared on his clothing. If he *still* didn't get the message, he would see it on his own skin.

This is an important fifth difference between the two paths. Someone who only uses wisdom to deal with his problems will never reflect on why they came. Sadly, he will need to receive stronger messages. The *ba'al bitachon*, however, will live serenely and joyfully with his *emunah*, even as he internalizes the message that was sent to him with love by the Ribbono shel Olam.

Repenting for Our Lack of *Emunah*

The Difficulty of Introspection

We all know the Gemara's statement, אם רואה אדם שיטורים באים עליו, יפשפש במעשיו, *if one sees that suffering comes to him, he should search his deeds* (*Berachos* 5a). This principle is likely predicated on our *Zohar HaKadosh*, which tells us that the sole purpose of *yissurim* is to send us a message to introspect and rectify our deeds.

We have previously explained that many people learn this Gemara through the wrong lens.

An Improper Understanding

Let's say that someone invested 100,000 in the hope that it will double in value, but in the end, the entire investment went to ground, and now he's in debt. He's in a quandary. He was smacked upside the head, and often this is accompanied by great humiliation as well.

Now, he can soothe himself by saying that it was surely *bashert*; it's really good; I have surely spared myself a much worse fate; Hashem will repay me in other ways; etc. **Thoughts like these are surely reassuring and will soothe a person in his agony.**

When this person learns the Gemara in *Berachos* about introspection when *yissurim* come to a person, he may feel broken and denigrated from Above—as though he's being told: “Can you attest that your *shem-iras einayim* was the way it was supposed to be for the last *ten years*?! This is what happens when you're not careful! Now you will pay for your misdeeds, with interest!”

Confused Thoughts

This person understandably becomes perturbed. **Is this payback?! They're going to take revenge from me?! Yes, I'm not perfect... I struggle with certain things... so, now I will have to suffer for this?!**

Instead of thinking encouraging thoughts which will *strengthen* him through his ordeal, he thinks, “Of course, the Ribbono shel Olam is far stronger than I am, and now is the time that He’ll begin smacking me around.... But am I the worst offender?! What about my neighbor in shul who can’t stop talking during davening, and everything works out for him just fine? Doesn’t *he* deserve any of this?”!

Such thoughts prevent a person from focusing properly. **He can’t think clearly about what he needs to repair and rectify.** He is hurt and pained, and he can’t collect himself in order to be מְשֻׁפָּשׁ in his deeds.

A Reminder That You’re Not the Boss

According to the *yesod* that we have learned in the *Zohar HaKadosh*, we derive tremendous *chizuk* when we search out and account for our actions—not with sadness or bitterness, but with joy.

If a person transgresses one specific mitzvah, he is sure be jolted from Above with a reminder that he has strayed—and that is the mitzvah of אֲנִכִּי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, *I am Hashem, your G-d*. The mitzvah of *emunah* is to believe that **the Ribbono shel Olam runs the world and conducts every event within it, and that we cannot do a thing to change the plan.** No matter how much you invest, no matter what you try and do, you will be powerless—because you don’t have the ability to improve your situation or to extricate yourself from it.

Even when we do *hishtadlus*, it is only because we were commanded to engage in efforts, but this doesn’t change anything practically—the only way we can change things is by turning to Hashem!

Someone who thinks that he can improve things on his own—“I’ll do something... I’ll come up with an idea...”—**transgresses the mitzvah of אֲנִכִּי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ**, *to believe that it is only the Ribbono shel Olam Who runs the world*. If one engages in *hishtadlus* with the attitude that he’s thereby doing or changing things through these actions, he has committed an *aveirah*!

We All Need *Chizuk* for Complete *Eemunah*

The reality is that we find ourselves in a world where everything seems contrary to the truth of our *emunah*. It is thus very difficult to remember it, and it is almost impossible to perform the mitzvah of *emunah* with perfection. There's almost no one who can go without needing to be reminded periodically that he has moved away from this pure belief.

Tzaddikim would say: were the *sefer Reishis Chachmah* (which speaks at length about the horrors of Gehinnom) in the streets and the *yetzer hara* on the shelf, our *avodah* would be far easier. The reality is, however, that the *yetzer hara* is here, in our faces, constantly working so that we will forget אנכי ה' אלוֹקֶיךָ.

And since the entire purpose and success of a *Yid* in This World and in the Next World is dependent on this very belief, and the Ribbono shel Olam knows that the world is a dark place which conceals the truth, causing people—even those who work on their *emunah* and *bitachon*—to forget the truth—and when people forget their *emunah* they fall away from success ברוחניות ובגשמיות, *spiritually and materially*.

Therefore, out of His great compassion and mercy, **He will remind us of it!** He places us in situations where we have no recourse, and it becomes clear to us that we cannot help ourselves—and then we're reminded of the truth that we're *completely* dependent on the Ribbono shel Olam.

Finding the Measure

According to this, we can understand the conclusion of this Gemara, which states, "If one has searched his deeds and hasn't found anything for which he could have deserved these *yissurim*, he should attribute them to *bittul Torah*." People may ask: There are a million things that I must repair... where do I begin?

Rashi clarifies that a person must search for misdeeds that correspond to the *yissurim* that he incurred — מידה כנגד מידה.

“Bittul Torah” vs. Strengthening *Emunah*

Therefore, Chazal tell us that if he searched for things that could have brought the *yissurim* and didn’t find any, he should attribute it to the most basic tenet in the Torah: *emunah*! It’s like a *rebbe* whose students isn’t grasping the Gemara from one angle, and he explains it to him from another vantage point so he will get the main idea.

The same applies here: Sometimes, a person can find the root of his *yissurim* by searching מידה כנגד מידה, *measure for measure*. But sometimes, he isn’t successful in identifying it. In this case, **go to the root of everything: the *nekudah* of *emunah* upon which all mitzvos are predicated!** For the reason a person commits *any aveirah* is because he’s lacking in the אלקים ה' אלוהים, his firm *emunah* in Hashem.

As Long as We’re on This Earth

When a person doesn’t see why *yissurim* came to him, **he should know that the Ribbono shel Olam wants to strengthen his *emunah*.** As long as a person finds himself on This World, he can use *chizuk* in *emunah*—to know with clarity, “I cannot do *anything* on my own; *only* the Ribbono shel Olam can help me!” This is the true meaning of יתלה בביטול תורה, *to attribute it to bittul Torah*—for all the 613 mitzvos are merely offshoots of this primary mitzvah of *emunah*. **If you don’t find the offshoot, go to the root and strengthen your *emunah* and *bitachon*.**

This is a tremendous principle for life: The Ribbono shel Olam places us regularly into situations wherein we have no recourse and no way out of them. This *will* happen to all of us, there *will be* יסורים. And when this happens, you should know that this is a great act of compassion from Hashem so you will internalize אלקים ה' אלוהים. When you find yourself in this situation, it means that the Ribbono shel Olam wants you to abandon everything and rely only on Him. Then you have properly executed יפשפש במעשיו and יתלה בביטול תורה. You have taught yourself אלקים ה' אלוהים, and this is indeed the greatest form of upholding the Torah.

“Life Wisdom” Makes us Forget the Truth

Often, we'll hear people look back on their lives and say: “I may not have *parnassah*... I may not have an important position... but at least I have good children.” This person is already 55 years old, and he's looking retrospectively at all of his dreams that never materialized. “I'm not a total failure,” he consoles himself. “I may not have managed to attain what I dreamed, but let's look at what I *did* achieve.” This person isn't lying in bed, depressed; because “at least I accomplished *something*.”

This isn't a terrible way to think—but this is the talk of *חכמת חיים*, a *practical approach to life*... a way of soothing himself—but it doesn't embrace the plan of Hashem wholeheartedly. **Do you really want Hashem to show you how even in the areas that you *think* you succeeded, even there you can do nothing without the Ribbono shel Olam?! Just admit that you can't do anything alone, and appreciate the good that you have. Why should you need to be pushed into a corner before you can perceive the truth that you can't do anything alone?**

A *Chinuch* Issue

Imagine that a father receives a phone call from his son's rebbi and he becomes very alarmed by it: “Your child needs help reading; he needs someone to tutor him in *kriah*,” the rebbe says. He then adds, “Actually, perhaps it would be better if you found a new yeshivah that would meet his needs better....”

The father argues, and he succeeds in keeping his son in the yeshivah...but when it comes to high school, he has trouble being accepted anywhere. They explain to the father that these yeshivos are simply not suited for this boy.... And the boy himself, as if on cue, manages to drive his parents insane throughout this process.

This father is completely broken: “Can you explain to me what they want from me?! The entire system is set up so that everyone needs to

attend a yeshivah, and because my son is delayed, he deserves a life sentence?! I have spent so much money and energy... I have davened so much... I have tried everything... tell me; what more can I do?!"

Sometimes, this saga continues until the child finally marries. Now begins a whole new saga... which is even more complicated. The father is so pained; **"What have I done to deserve this... I tried so hard,"** he says.

The Right Way to Calmness

Now, there are multiple ways to deal with this situation. There are people who become completely broken and depressed. Then there are people who go into denial: "So what if he said... I've heard of worse things. I will call the school and force them to keep him." Then there are people who take the situation extremely seriously, running from one therapist to the next professional.

There's nothing really wrong with doing things to calm ourselves or doing proper *hishtadlus*. But one moment! **Can you also take into account that the Ribbono shel Olam has clearly placed you in a situation where you have no way out?** This is an act of great compassion so that you will take out a *Tehillim* and soothe yourself with *emunah*. Your calmness shouldn't come from a place of distraction. Your serenity shouldn't come because "you have a plan." And your tranquility shouldn't come because a friend told you, "I had such a child and he turned out just fine.... It's just a few challenging years."

All of these *chizuk* methods are fine. But if you don't find your serenity *only* in them, the *yissurim* will, *chas v'shalom*, keep returning—because **the Ribbono shel Olam is trying to teach you the truth; that you have no recourse but to trust in Him.**

Splitting the Sea to Hear the Truth

The Sfes Emes (Pesach) explains that this was the reason for קריעת ים סוף. Because when the *Yidden* emerged from Mitzrayim, they hadn't yet internalized the idea of complete and utter reliance on Hashem. The

exodus from Mitzrayim was generated from Above, and not within their hearts.

For this reason, it was necessary, one week later, for the Egyptians to pursue them, and the challenges recurred with even greater ferocity. **Now they clearly saw that there was no other way out, only the one of reliance on Hashem.**

The Greatest Gift

The knowledge that we have no way out must permeate our hearts in the deepest way—because **this is the most important mitzvah that we have come onto this world to fulfill.** And for this reason, the Ribbono shel Olam makes sure to remind us of it.

Instead of becoming bitter and broken when these situations occur, we should understand that **this is the greatest gift from Hashem!** These *yissurim* are a great gift from Heaven to teach me to rely purely on the Ribbono shel Olam. But what will the end be? I don't know. Will things get worse? I have no idea! I can't manage... I have no way out? **Ah, now I can begin to dance.** If I see no way out, I can be joyful, because as long as I think that I have a way out on my own, I have not learned the truth.

If We Get the Message, We Rid Ourselves of Suffering

This also applies to matters of health. First, a person tries going to this doctor and that expert. But eventually, he comes to a place where he must place his trust in Hashem. The same is true regarding money and business. The Ribbono shel Olam will always place us in situations where we can't manage on our own, because he wants us to learn אנכי ה' אלוהיך!

If the person accepts the message and the lesson, knowing that it comes from the greatest place of love, and even when he *does* need to do *hishtadlus*, he maintains his clarity that he can't do anything alone, **then he won't need follow-up messages.** The Ribbono shel Olam will remove the suffering sooner.

If, however, a person will simply distract himself and calm himself with the route of wisdom, he will, *R"l*, need more messages—because the Ribbono shel Olam will not allow a person to go through a lifetime on this earth straying from what is most basic and important. The Ribbono shel Olam loves every *Yid*, and He knows that absorbing this knowledge is our greatest success in This World and in the Next World.



Attaining *Kedushas Eretz Yisrael* Through Our Covenant with Hashem

The Pain of the *Shechinah* in *Galus*

The Two Forces of Evil Are the Same

The Sfas Emes in *Parashas Pinchas* elaborates on the idea that the covenant that Hashem has forged with the Jewish People—that deep and everlasting bond—is not only in body, but also in “place.” We say וברית עמנו, *and Hashem has established with us a bris (covenant) that He will give the land of Canaan [to Klal Yisrael]*. Thus, **the forces that present us with great challenges in matters of *kedushah* (*bris*) are the very same forces of evil that prevent us from entering the land of Eretz Yisrael** and meriting the Beis HaMikdash and the *Kodesh HaKodashim*. The covenant that Hashem forges with the Jewish People applies to עולם שנה נפש, *place, time, and soul*.

There is a “holy of holies” within every *Yid's neshamah*, and there are forces that do everything they can to ensure that we cannot access that holiness. Similarly, these forces do whatever they can to prevent us from accessing the *Kodesh HaKodashim* in place.

It is therefore no accident that **the months of Tammuz and Av**—which are closely tied to *galus* and redemption (which will lead us back to Eretz Yisrael)—are the months that correspond to our eyes, and to **the great battle for the holiness of a *Yid*** that each of us must wage.

One Step for Another

There's an aspect of this battle for *kedushah* that is often overlooked, and it is important to speak about it. A person seeks to be pure and holy. He davens to the Ribbono shel Olam for assistance in being holy, and he makes himself guardrails and barriers for extra precaution in this area. But we often lack empathy toward others who struggle in these matters.

It is similar to a person who is asked to donate money for a cause, and he says, "I can't give to others when I have my own problems. I have a large family, with many bills to pay... how can I deal with *your* debts when I have my own struggles and challenges?" But this is incorrect—for **every one of us is obligated to do for another person**. To the contrary—by doing for others, you will spare yourself so much heartache. Even poor people are enjoined to give to other poor people. Every *Yid* is required to engage in *tzedakah* and *chesed*. You have problems? **By taking one step for another, you will be spared from the need to take five hundred steps for yourself!** Invest in helping others, and the merit will surely stand by you.

The *Shechinah's* Pain

When it comes to *nisyonos* in *avodas Hashem*, a person often thinks: "I have enough of my own challenges, *nisyonos*, and 'open accounts' with the Ribbono shel Olam." I need to do *teshuvah* for my past, and I must do my best to ensure that I don't revert to my old ways. I simply don't have the capacity to think about the challenges of other people. I need to take more upon myself?! Believe me, I have enough...."

But we must know that this isn't right. We must be cognizant of the pain of the *Shechinah* and of the pain of other *Yidden*. **How many *Yidden* suffer and struggle with pain, both physical and emotional, in the soul and the *neshamah*, in ways that cannot even be described, and they don't find peace in *ruchniyus* or in *gashmiyus*—all because of their struggles and *nisyonos*.** The hair on our heads would stand up if we'd properly appreciate the deep struggles that many *Yidden* endure—**not knowing where to turn for relief from their struggles or what can help**

them. They've tried everything... they've cried and davened... and yet they continue to struggle, each in their own way.

The Power of Prayer

Anyone whose feelings have been properly honed looks at others who are struggling and says: "I will feel their pain, I will daven for their challenges—for whose pain is this if not the pain of the *Shechinah*...." The Sfas Emes teaches us here that **this struggle for kedushah is the essence of the galus haShechinah**. It's not some peripheral phenomenon that happens to exist. Klal Yisrael is one entity, and we all need redemption from this *galus*. And **when Yidden become pure and holy, they'll be worthy of entering and accessing places that are pure and holy, and thus they make a place for the Shechinah and the Beis HaMikdash**.

We must daven for those who struggle so mightily, and we cannot underestimate the power and the potency of our *tefillos* in this regard. For ***siyata diShmaya* is a tremendous aspect of our success in the battle for our kedushah**. Klal Yisrael needs so much *tefillah*, and the resulting *siyata diShmaya* goes so far in sparing a *Yid* from these struggles. Tzaddikim would say that there are ***Malachim* who sweep the streets before a *Yid* goes outside so that he doesn't encounter forbidden sights**. Each and every day, there are *Yidden* who merit *siyata diShmaya* and are spared from struggles in miraculous ways.

Empathizing with the Ribbono shel Olam

In this way—by davening and pleading with Hashem to help *Yidden* in their *kedushah* struggles—a *Yid* shoulders the burden of the Ribbono shel Olam, so to speak. **A *Yid* always has a place to the direct his pain**. We tend to think that when we're in pain, we have one of two options: either to distract ourselves from the pain (or go into denial), or to enter a mode of *ידי ועוצם ידי*, *to work our way out of the problem on our own*. But **for a *Yid*, there's a third way, the true way: to direct our pain to the *Tehillim*, to soak it through with our prayers**.

This person says, I will daven for my children, for my teenagers and their struggles. And **we must not forget to daven for the Shechinah**. It

is so very *Yiddish*, and so very pure, when we include the pain of the *Shechinah* in our davening—for the pain of *Yidden* in their struggles is the pain of the *Shechinah*. Furthermore, when we understand how much the Ribbono shel Olam suffers, as it were, from our spiritual suffering, we will be awakened to daven for His pain too.

Drawing Joy and Strength From The *Bris* With Hashem

The Source of True Pleasure

The Sfas Emes adds another point regarding this crucial battle for the *kedushah* of a *Yid*: **“In accordance with the degree of joy that a *Yid* feels at the covenant that Hashem forged with us, so too will be the extent of his ability to properly guard that covenant—and this joy is what Pinchas held on to as he carried out his great act of zealotry.”**

We may fault ourselves regarding our failures in *kedushah*, we may regret the past and resolve to do better in the future—but **we must feel joy due to the very fact that Hashem forged a *bris* with us, and this itself will give us the strength to prevail in this *nisayon*.**

HaKadosh Baruch Hu chose us, and He informed us in advance: **Your *neshamah* will crave pleasure, but I establish a covenant with you that you should draw pleasure from Me.** It will be brutal and it will be difficult, but the reward that you will receive—in This World and in the Next World—will be exponentially greater than any difficulty.

Drawing Strength from the Covenant

We must feel tremendous joy that we were chosen by Hashem and given this mitzvah—beginning when we were eight days old. We give thanks for this during *Birchas HaMazon*—בשרינו שחתמת בבשרינו—ועל בריתך. This means that we must think also about the positive aspects, the joy of the covenant with Hashem, and the great blessing that it brings into our lives.

A person must think about the Beis HaMikdash that each of us can merit to enter. On the Seder night, we enumerate the many blessings

that Hashem gave us, beginning with the Exodus from Mitzrayim, and we mention also the gift of the Land of Eretz Yisrael. One may ask, why should we give thanks for this at a time when we're in *galus*, and we're so distant from Eretz Yisrael? The answer is that **the essence of Eretz Yisrael is alive and well**, and it is accessible to all of us—because Hashem gave it to us. While we wait for the ultimate return to the Land and for the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash, we can still access the *kedushah* of Eretz Yisrael.

Our access to Eretz Yisrael, the Beis HaMikdash, and the Kodesh HaKodashim is contingent upon our success in guarding the covenant that Hashem has established with us, as the Sfas Emes is teaching us. And this must bring us great joy. **A Yid must remember that he must celebrate with great joy even one triumph in kedushah—and that it is the Ribbono shel Olam Who gives him the ability to fight.** In this, we're completely different from the *goyim* all around us. The Ribbono shel Olam gives us the ability to daven to Him and to draw strength and fortitude to become pure and guarded, filled with light... a Yid of "Eretz Yisrael."

No One Is Ever Cast Away

That is, even if a Yid is still on the journey to "Eretz Yisrael"—he's still in the proverbial *Midbar* during the forty years of wandering—he is still not cut off from Eretz Yisrael. And just because a Yid hasn't merited to enter Eretz Yisrael *all the way*, it doesn't mean that he doesn't have a connection to its holiness. And this is why we give thanks for Eretz Yisrael even though it isn't yet time to enter the Land—because on this night, we have received the *potential* to access the holiness of Eretz Yisrael.

The Rambam rules, and the *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* cites this in *Hilchos Talmud Torah*, that no one is ever cast away from Hashem. This means that **every Yid will arrive at the kedushah of Eretz Yisrael—because this is the place of every Yid.** And if so, you are *already* in Eretz Yisrael.

Sure, we must daven for this... yes, we must guard our *nefesh*, and we must invest in Torah study, which ignites the inner fire in a per-

son. But never forget to awaken your inner joy and yearning for this holy covenant.

Every Yid Will Leave Galus

Never Despair

There is so much despair in the world—especially in this area of *kedushah*. And as we see in the words of the Sfas Emes, **despair is part of the *klipah* that stands in the way of our accessing *kedushah*.** If a person is learning a *masechta* but falls behind by twenty *blatt*... to close the Gemara and give up is a childish move. **He is *still* in the game—despite not being perfect. A person must move forward. Daven for *siyata diShmaya* and continue on—and then you will see success.** And be joyful. *Be joyful now!* Not when you complete the *masechta* – *now!* Think now about the *siyum*, but be joyful now.

Because the more joy one feels *during* the challenge, the greater will be his good feeling during the battle itself, and the greater will be his ultimate triumph.

Thanking Toward the Future

The idea of being joyful for our future success is no different from the principle that **when a person is in a tight spot, in a moment of challenge and difficulty, he should give thanks for the salvation that *will* come.** There are numerous sources for this concept that a person should thank for the future salvation—because **this person has such deep *emunah* in the future salvation that he is already connected to that place in the future,** and thus he can already give thanks for it.

This person says: For the Ribbono shel Olam, the past, the present, and the future are all the same... and **I choose to connect with the great future that Hashem has in store for me.** When he does so, it is an act of *avodas Hashem*. On Shabbos, we thank Hashem אשר אתה עתיד לעשות עמי, *for all the kindness that You will do for me in the future.* **I give thanks for the future! Because I am a Yid, and I know that the darkness**

of the present is only a preparation for the light of the future—*galus* is the actual *beginning* of the redemption.

Kedushah Is for Everyone

And so, we must know that our bitter *nisyonos* are the deepest *galus* imaginable—and if the *galus* is so deep, the redemption will be even greater. Indeed, every *Yid* will merit to leave this *galus*, and if so, not only is it permitted to give thanks to the Ribbono shel Olam for His salvation—we are *obligated* to do so.

And this is for everyone. You will not find a *siddur* or *bencher* in which the words ועל בריתך שחתמתם בבשרינו is in parenthesis... applicable only to those who feel worthy of it. It is *for everyone!* Give thanks for this covenant in which we are assured that the Ribbono shel Olam will assist us—and **then go out and do everything in your power so that your words will be truer.**

The main thing is to remember that you were chosen by Hashem, and that He placed His trust in you. This is a greatly important piece of ammunition in overcoming the *yetzer hara*. We must daven for others and empathize with them, and we must feel great joy at having been chosen for this battle. And—especially in these days of בין המצרים—we must remember the צער השכינה to the greatest possible extent. This is a period when the גלות השכינה, and our distance from “Eretz Yisrael—literal and figurative— is felt most keenly.

Joy Amid Battle

We know that many have the custom to make *siyumim* during the Nine Days—because this is our greatest way of strengthening the *Shechinah*. **We give thanks and we express joy for having merited to be *Yidden* and for having the ability and the privilege to be pure and holy.**

The Beis Aharon of Karlin once said that when a *Yid* returns from the street and wasn't challenged with forbidden sights, *R"l*, he must take out a violin and sing praises to the Ribbono shel Olam. This joy is what draws light to the *neshamah*, giving it the fortitude to march

forward. One must dance, and one must give *kiddush*... to express, in a most real and practical way, our gratitude to the Ribbono shel Olam for every success in *kedushah*—and this will enable to us to be triumphant, *be'ezras Hashem*.

