Parashas Pinchas

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יו"ל ע"י

קהילת שבתי בבית ד בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הרה"צ

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English edition

טיב הפרשה

<גמילות חסדים – ביטוי לאהבת ה

Acts of kindness- an expression of love of Hashem

וַיּאֹמֵר ה' אֵל משֵׁה קַח לָךְּ אֵת יָהוֹשֶׁעַ בִּן נוּן אִישׁ אֲשֵׁר רוּחַ בּוֹ וְסָמַכְתָּ אָת יַדְךָּ עַלַיו: (כז, יח)

Hashem said to Moshe, "Take to yourself Yehoshua bin Nun, a man in whom there is spirit, and lean your hand upon him." (27:18)

Rashi explains: Take to yourself - Take him with words. "You are fortunate for you are privileged to lead the children of the Omnipresent."

When Moshe wanted to arouse a desire in Yehoshua to lead the people of Israel, he said to him, "Fortunate are you who have merited this!" And why? Because these are the children of HaKadosh Baruch Hu!

To what may this be compared? To one who greatly loves his friend and longs to express to him the depth of his love. If he does good directly to his friend, that alone will not be sufficient to express the depth of his love. Only when he does good also to his friend's children will he fully express that love, for it is as if he is saying, "I have loved you so much that I have become close even to your children, and I desire to do good to them as well."

So Moshe said to Yehoshua: Surely you have merited deep love for your Creator, and surely you greatly yearn to express before Him the depth of your love for Him. And how can you do that? If through commandments between man and Hashem—it is true that this brings satisfaction to HaKadosh Baruch Hu—but it is not sufficient to express the full depth of your love for your Creator. Only through doing good to His children and tending to their spiritual and physical needs can you express the depth of your love for your Creator. For by doing so, it is as if you are saying to Him: "I have loved You so much that I have become close even to Your children, and I am ready to give my soul to do good for them."

So did HaKadosh Baruch Hu instruct Moshe to sav to Yehoshua, knowing that this was Yehoshua's deepest desire—to express before Him the depth of his love for his Creator. For HaKadosh Baruch Hu knew that because of Yehoshua's immense love for Him, he would rejoice to take upon himself the burden of leadership, even though it involved a nation that is troublesome and stubborn.

And in this matter there is also a teaching for all generations. For behold, every individual, if he contemplates, will see that HaKadosh Baruch Hu does good with him every day and every hour with every form of goodness-even though He is not obligated to do so. And even one who is surrounded

שיב רמערכר כן בנות צלפחד דוברות

The daughters of Tzelafchad speak correctly

We all know the story of Rav Amram Chasida who underwent a difficult trial, and at the moment he saw that he was nearly failing, it was the middle of the night when everyone was sleeping. Rav Amram could have gone back to sleep, but he remained in his place and began to cry out, "A fire in Amram's house! A fire in Amram's house!" His students heard the cries and thought there was, chas v'shalom, a fire in their Rav's house. They all immediately came running with buckets of water, but when they arrived, they saw that there was no fire. His students said to him, "Rabbeinu, you have shamed us!" Rav Amram answered them: "It is better that you be ashamed of Amram in this world and not be ashamed of him in the World to Come."

This is the story. And everyone asks: Why did Rav Amram need to cry out and publicly announce his disgrace, thereby shaming himself and perhaps even his students?

The daughters of Tzelafchad demanded the portion of their father (27:3): - 'אבינו מת במדבר והוא לא היה... בעדת קרח כי בחטאו מתובנים לא היה לו' "Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not... among the assembly of Korach, but died for his own sin, and he had no sons." Their request was, "Why should our father's name be diminished... give us a possession among our father's brothers." Moshe Rabbeinu did not know what to rule, but HaKadosh Baruch Hu said (27:7), 'כן בנות צלפחד דוברות, נתון יתתן להם אחוזת נחלה - "The daughters of Tzelafchad speak correctly you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance." Rashi explains: "This teaches that their eyes saw what the eye of Moshe did not see." And this is astonishing: In what merit did the daughters of Tzelafchad see what Moshe did not see? And furthermore, why was this section written in their name in the Torah?

Chazal say that Tzelafchad was the "wood-gatherer" who was executed for the sin of desecrating Shabbos. And Chazal have said, "If Israel would only keep two Shabbosim, they would immediately be redeemed." And this Tzelafchad was the cause that the Jewish people were not redeemed. Seemingly, his daughters should have hidden his identity and not said, "He died for his sin." But since their entire purpose was that their father's name not be diminished, that some remembrance of him should remain, therefore they preferred to publicize his name—even if it would bring them shame. And since they were willing to be shamed—they merited those great qualities.

So too, Rav Amram—he knew it was better to be ashamed in this world, and indeed, he merited that until this day we call him "Rav Amram Chasida"! We are not required to be ashamed, but when one fulfills a mitzvah with self-sacrifice—even at the price of disgrace—its virtue and the reward for it are immeasurable! - Tiv HaTorah - Pinchas

various concealments—if he believes that "everything HaKadosh Baruch hu does is for good," then he believes that even this is part of Hashem's desire to do good with him. And from that feeling, that HaKadosh Baruch hu does good with him all the time, he will surely be awakened with immense feelings of love toward HaKadosh Baruch Hu and will surely be stirred with a desire to express at least the depth of his gratitude. And how can he do that? Only by engaging in gemilus chasadim—acts of kindness and by doing good with the children of HaKadosh Baruch Hu! For through this he becomes as one who says to Hashem: "I have loved You so much that I have become close even to Your children, and I desire to do good with them from the great love I have for You."

So too did one of the righteous men of the previous generation say: The greatness of the righteous is measured by the degree of *Ahavas Yisrael*—love of fellow Jews—that they possess. And the greatness of every Jew is measured by the degree of love he has for his fellow, by how much he is willing to exert himself for his friend. For the love a person has for others expresses the depth of his love for his Creator, and the depth of

his love for his Creator stems from his closeness to the Creator Baruch Hu and from contemplating His many kindnesses toward him.

Indeed, when one helps and assists his fellow, it brings great pleasure Above. As Maran the Chafetz Chaim wrote in his sefer Zechor L'Miriam (chapter 11): "It is brought in the Midrash of our Chazal that HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to Israel: 'My beloved children, am I lacking anything that I need to ask of you? What do I ask of you but that you should love one another, and honor one another, and have awe for one another, and that there should be no transgression or theft or anything disgraceful among you.' Therefore it says: 'He has told you, O man, what is good, and what Hashem seeks from you-only to do justice and to love kindness..."

He goes on to explain the matter with a parable: There was a man who was very wealthy, and he had several sons—all of them great and clever merchants who knew how to succeed in wealth and trade. And each brother was filled with jealousy toward the other, and each one wanted to surpass his brother. A wise man said to them: "Why do you toil so much? There is no end to your labor—this one envies that one, and that one envies the otherwho knows what will come of this in the end? It would be better for you to love one another and to be truly like one person who loves all his limbs and has no jealousy or hatred between them. Then you will all be beloved to your father, just as if he had a single child born to him in his old age. And naturally, all of his wealth will be solely for you, and that wealth will suffice for your children and grandchildren to the end of all generations."

So it is in our matter: HaKadosh Baruch Hu is our Father, to whom belong greatness, might, beauty, etc., for everything in the heavens and the earth is His. Therefore, if the people of Israel would truly love one another properly, then automatically blessing and abundance would be increased for each individual, and the hand of Hashem would not be short

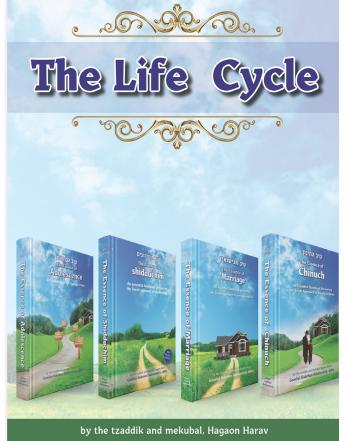
to save, chas v'shalom. And it makes no difference to HaKadosh Baruch Hu whether there are ten thousand or many tens of thousands on Earth—He provides sustenance and nourishment to all, sufficiently according to their needs

And he adds further: One who behaves in a manner opposite to all this—who overpowers his fellow and does not treat his fellow with respect, and in all matters behaves in opposition to him—his punishment is very great. We find this with the students of Rebbe Akiva: Even though they were great in Torah, because they did not treat one another with respect, the honor of Heaven was desecrated, and the attribute of judgment struck them, and they all died in a plague between Pesach and Shavuos. For this, all of Israel mourns each year during the days of the Sefirah. From all this we see clearly: When does creation find favor in the eyes of HaKadosh Baruch Hu? When the people of Israel are united together and there is no jealousy, hatred, or competition among them, and each one thinks about the benefit and well-being of his fellow. Then HaKadosh Baruch Hu rejoices in His creation. And regarding this it is said: "Hashem will rejoice in His works."

So concludes select passages from his

pleasant words.

These matters are especially necessary for us to know davs—the davs these of Bein *HaMetzarim*—The Three Weeks, during which we must increase love and friendship toward our fellow. For in these days we must rectify the things that brought about the destruction of our Beis HaMikdash, and one of them was baseless hatred, Rachmana litzlan. Therefore, beyond the effort we must make to abandon hatred and competition, it is fitting that we also increase our love toward others, so that this may serve as a rectification for the days in which hatred persisted among us. And in this merit, we shall be worthy to witness the consolation of Zion and Yerushalayim, speedily in our days, Amein.



Gamliel Hakohen Rabinovitch, shlita

שיב ההשגרחה

'חיסכון האלף

'The thousand step savings'

I have the merit of publishing a weekly sheet on the weekly Torah portion. On Tuesday, a dear Heaven-fearing man approached me and asked for the bulletin. I told him that today it was going to print, and that tomorrow, Wednesday, with Hashem's help, I would have the sheet for him. He asked if perhaps there was any way to receive it today, because he already wanted to go through the sheet today and prepare himself for Shabbos Kodesh. I explained to him again that on Wednesday I would take care of it for him.

I came home and thought to myself: "What did this man really ask for? Just the sheet that you have the merit to publish so that he can prepare for Shabbos. What is the problem with making a Jew happy by printing one copy on your home printer?!"

Saying and doing—I went over to the printer and printed him one copy. I sent the sheet with my son to deliver it to his house. When my son returned from the errand, I asked him if he had found the man and whether he was happy with the sheet. My son answered: "He was disappointed because you sent him the bulletin of Parashas Shelach instead of this week's parasha, Parashas Chukas."

I quickly checked and saw that indeed I had made a mistake in the title of the parashah, and instead of Chukas I had written Shelach...

I immediately called the printing house, and they told me they were just about to begin printing the sheet. They stopped, and I sent them the corrected version with the right parashah and title.

I saw clearly that more than the host does for the poor person, the poor person does for the host. Hashem sent me a small test, and the moment I withstood it, I saw how much I had gained. As R' Shlomkeh of Zvhil said: "When a person takes one step for another, he saves a thousand steps for himself—literally!" For if the title of the parashah is incorrect, people will not take the sheet, and all our efforts would have been in vain...

שיב המעשיות

The Three Weeks

״צוּר רְאֵה נַפְשֵׁנוּ כִּי שָׁחָה, וְשִׁבְעָה עָשָׂר בְּתַמּוּז הַפָּךְ לָנוּ לְשָׂשׁוֹן וּלְשִׂמְחָה. רְאֵה ה׳ וְחַלְּצֵנוּ מֵאָסוֹן, וְשִׁבְעָה עָשָׂר בְּתַמּוּז הֲפָךְ לָנוּ לְשִׂמְחָה וּלְשָׁשׁוֹן. תּאמֵר לְצִיּוֹן קוּמָה, וְשִׁבְעָה עָשָׂר בְּתַמּוּז הַפַּךְ לָנוּ לִיוֹם יְשׁוּעָה וְנֶחָמָה״ (סליחות לי״ז בתמוּז).

«Hashem, see our souls for they are bent low, and the Seventeenth of Tammuz may it be turned for us into joy and gladness. Look, Hashem, and save us from disaster, and the seventeenth of Tammuz may it be turned for us into gladness and joy. Say to Tzion, arise, and the Seventeenth of Tammuz may it be turned for us into a day of salvation and consolation.» (Selichos for the Seventeenth of Tammuz)

The holy *sefer* Bnei Yissaschar *zt"l* (*Maamar Alef* on the Essence of the Month, section 5) innovates a practical directive for a Jew to observe during the Three Weeks.

These are his words: "It appears to me that one should have specific intention during these two months, when reciting the phrase ozer dalim (He helps the poor), that Hashem will quickly help these two months, Tammuz and Av, which are called 'poor.' How so? This is also based on what the Arizal explains (see Megaleh Amukos, Va'eschanan, ophen 105) regarding the name 'Ado-noi' (א-דני)' in its full spelling—alef, dalet, nun, yud—which contains twelve letters. Each month is illuminated by one letter. Accordingly, the sequence of the months is as follows: Nissan corresponds to alef, lyar to lamed, Sivan to peh. Thus, for Tammuz, the corresponding letter is daled, and for Av, it is lamed—together forming the word dal, or poor.

"For these two months are 'impoverished' due to our many sins, until Hashem, blessed be He, will raise them and lift them from their impoverished state.

"Therefore, one should have in mind during the phrase ozer dalim that Hashem will help these poor months. The word dal has two interpretations: one connotes of poverty and lacking, and the other connotes elevation, as in the pasuk (Tehillim 30:2), - יאַרוֹתְנִי ה' כִּי דְלִיתְנִי will exalt You, Hashem, for You have raised me. At present, the letters dal and lamed of these months correspond to the first meaning, denoting poverty. But Hashem, the helper of the poor, will soon elevate them to the second meaning, that of exaltation and uplifting, etc. Understand this well."

The holy Rebbe of Sanz, the author of Divrei Chaim, zt''l, once traveled during the Three Weeks to visit his great teacher, the holy Rebbe Rav Naftali Tzvi of Ropshitz, zt''l.

His eldest son, the holy Rav Yechezkel Shraga of Shinova, the author of Divrei Yechezkel *zt"l*, wished to join him on this journey. However, the Divrei Chaim hesitated and explained his reasoning: "In Ropshitz, the custom during these days of mourning, even during the Nine Days, is to conduct joyous celebrations with meat and wine during *siyumim*. Yet the Rebbe of Shinova is known as an exceedingly scrupulous halachic authority, and he makes a great commotion about anything that appears to him as improper. I am therefore concerned that he will cause an uproar in Ropshitz."

The Shinova Rebbe reassured his holy father, promising that he would not say a single word in Ropshitz and would keep his zeal to himself. Hearing this assurance, his father allowed him to join the trip.

Indeed, the Shinova Rebbe kept his promise. During their stay in the great court of Ropshitz, he held his tongue firmly. Even when his anger was stirred when the chassidim seemed to be slightly exaggerating in their feasts with meat and wine, he firmly restrained himself. Though his zeal for Hashem burned within him, he upheld his father and teacher's command, refraining from any criticism of the ways of the Ropshitzer chassidim.

At one of these festive meals, during the recitation of *Birkas HaMazon*, when the holy Rebbe of Ropshitz *zt"l* reached the blessing, וּבְנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בִּמְהֵרָה «And rebuild Yerushalayim, the holy city,» he suddenly burst into bitter weeping.

For a long time, the saintly Rebbe melted into copious tears, with his chassidim and *talmidim* weeping along with him in a powerful *his'orerus*.

At that moment, the Shinova Rebbe realized the depth of their emotions and how the chassidim fully recognized and internalized the mourning of the Three Weeks. This brought calm and relief to his soul.

The holy Rebbe, the Minchas Elazar of Munkacs zt"l, had a custom during weekday tish gatherings for significant occasions or yahrtzeits. If the time for Birkas HaMazon coincided with midnight, he removed his shoes. During the blessing, רַחֶם נָא ה' אֱלֹקִינוּ עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל - עַמֵּך. וְעַל יִרוּשָׁלַיִם עִירֵף»Have mercy, Hashem, our God, on Yisrael Your nation and on Yerushalayim Your city...» he cried and lamented bitterly, sighing and groaning loudly, as was his sacred way, until the conclusion of, וּבְנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם יעיר הַקֹּדֵשׁ בִּמְהֵרָה בִּיַמֵינוּ - "And rebuild Yerushalayim, the holy city, speedily in our days." He would linger over this precious blessing for a long time.

In the city of Ramat HaSharon, there resided a distinguished Bucharian talmid chacham. He had immigrated to the Holy Land during the Bucharian aliyah and dedicated himself to Torah study alongside the renowned Rav Yaakov Edelstein, zt"l, the famed Rav of Ramat HaSharon.

This man was among the remnants of the Bucharian elders who preserved their community's spiritual flame. He was commonly known as "The Mori" (Teacher), as Bucharian *rabbanim* were called

One of the beautiful customs passed down from his forebears was his nightly recital of *Tikkun Chatzos*. Seated on the floor, he would chant the *Tikkun* with soulful, old *niggunim* and heartfelt tears. Many gathered to join him, especially during the days of the Three Weeks.

Anyone who entered his home during this time was met with tears and brief words of arousal: "The destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*! The *Shechinah* is in exile!" His words stirred complete repentance and a fervent yearning for the complete redemption!

Rav Shmuel Ashkenazi *zt"l*, a *talmid* and close associate of Rav Yosef Tzvi Dushinsky, *zt"l*, the Maharitz, related that the Rav's typical sleep schedule consisted of approximately four hours per night. Each night, he would sleep from 2:00 a.m. until 6:00 a.m. But it was his practice every evening to retreat to his bedroom at 1:30 a.m., locking the door from 1:30 until bedtime, during which no one could speak with him until the next morning.

Rav Shmuel was somewhat puzzled by this half-hour of solitude each night. On one occasion, when the opportunity arose to observe the practices of the Maharitz during this time, he was astonished by what he saw.

He recounted what he witnessed: "Immediately after entering his room and locking the door, our holy teacher extinguished the light in the room, took out a small candle, lit it, and sat on a low stool on the floor. With awe and reverence, he opened his siddur to the prayer of *Tikkun Chatzos* and began to cry with deep, heartfelt tears over the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, lamenting incessantly over the exile of the *Shechinah* and the suffering of the Jewish people. This continued for a full half-hour every single night."

Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld zt"l, the leading Rav of Eretz Yisrael, instructed young men among his talmidim and followers that if they were still awake at midnight—especially in the winter months when midnight is not very late—and had not yet gone to bed, even if they were not accustomed to reciting the full Tikkun Chatzos as practiced by the pious and anshei ma'aseh, they should at least recite Tehillim 137, לַבָּהַרוֹת בָּבֶּל - By the rivers of Bavel, to participate, even partially, in the mourning of the Shechinah, through this tefillah.

I have already elaborated elsewhere (see the wonderful sefer "Tiv HaNechamah") on what I was privileged to witness regularly in the presence of Rav David Jungreis zt"I, a Raavad in Yerushalayim. Each time he reached the berachah, וְלִירוּשָׁלַיִם עִירְךְּ בְּרַחֲמִים תָּנֹשׁוּב "And to Yerushalayim, Your city, return in mercy" during Shemoneh Esrei, he prayed with such devotion that his beard was soaked, drop by drop, with tears. He made a gesture with his hands, as if choking himself, due to his profound sorrow at the destruction, as

if accepting upon himself a form of death for the sake of the redemption of Yisrael.

Be'ezras Hashem, I found support for this practice in the Yaaros Devash (derush 1), regarding the intent behind the blessings of the Shemoneh Esrei: "During the berachah, ולירושלים עירף ברחמים תשוב - 'And to Yerushalayim, Your city, return,' and, אֶת י צמח דוד עבדר מהרה תצמיח - 'And speedily sprout the branch of David,' one must shed unceasing tears over the rebuilding of Yerushalayim and the restoration of the Davidic dynasty, for this is the pinnacle of human perfection. If we lack Yerushalayim and the kingdom of David, why do we need life at all? If the heavenly angels weep and lament over the destruction of Yerushalayim day and night without ceasing, and they are the mourners of Tzion, how can we remain silent and not cry over the desecration of Hashem's name caused by the destruction of Yerushalayim and the loss of the Davidic kingdom?

"Every person is obligated to say in his heart: 'Ribbono shel Olam, I surrender my soul for the sanctification of Your Name. If I am not worthy to witness the rebuilding of Tzion and the restoration of the Davidic kingdom, I am willing to die for the sanctification of Your Name. May my eyes not see it, but please rebuild Yerushalayim and sprout the branch of David, so that Your name be sanctified."

Among the Jews of Yerushalayim in the previous generation was a righteous man, Rav Yosef Dushinsky *zt"l*, a renowned and skilled butcher in the old Machane Yehudah market.

Every day during the Three Weeks between the seventeenth of Tammuz and the ninth of Av, at precisely midday, he would close his shop for an hour and enter the nearby Etz Chaim Talmud Torah. There, he would find an empty side room, sit on the floor, and cry bitterly over the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* as he recited *Tikkun Chatzos* with great emotion and a loud voice. He would read the entire order of *Eichah* slowly and with composure. Only after completing the entire *Tikkun* would he return to his shop and continue cutting meat.

Such were the Jews of Yerushalayim. All the more so, the *talmidei chachamim*, *ge'onim*, and tzaddikim of the city, who wept with their whole hearts over the destruction, sharing in the suffering of Klal Yisrael and the exile of the holy *Shechinah*.