

במחשבות

# *The Way of Emunah*

Collected Thoughts  
on the Weekly Parshah

From

**Rabbi Meir Isamar  
Rosenbaum shlita**

**Ki Sisa - Purim**

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## The Purim Miracle

### Mordechai Defeated Haman Because of His Concern for Esther:

The *pasuk* states (Esther 2:11) that Mordechai would walk every day in the king's courtyard to know how Esther was doing. The Sefas Emes *zy"á* (Purim 5637) writes that since everything mentioned in the Megillah is related to the miracle, this too must have some relevance. He explains that for years after Esther was taken to the palace, Mordechai would go every day to encourage her and make sure she was okay. Since she was an orphan, and because she was taken against her will and forced to live in a non-Jewish house, he was very worried about her.

The miracle occurred in the merit of Mordechai's concern for Esther. **Since he went every day to encourage Esther, the**

**orphan, he merited defeating Haman and saving Klal Yisroel.**

### The Fast on Pesach:

The *pasuk* states (Esther 4:17): "*Vaya'avur Mordechai.*" (And Mordechai passed.) The Gemara (Megillah 15A) understands this to mean that Mordechai was "*oiver*" (transgressed) the first day of Pesach by fasting on that day. Rav Yissochor Dov of Belz *zy"á* asks why he declared a fast specifically on that day.

He answers with a story about Rav Yitzchok of Radvil *zy"á*.

As a young man, before he became famous, Rav Yitzchok was very poor. He made his living as a melamed, teaching the children of a villager. One day, his employer became very sick. Rav Yitzchok advised him to give *tzedakah* to ten poor men,

and to ask them to fast for one full day and daven for his recovery.

Rav Yitzchok himself was one of the ten poor men who the villager gave money to, but he did not fast like the others. Instead, he used the money to buy fish and other refreshments, and he made a festive meal for his family.

The villager soon was healed. When he heard that not only had Rav Yitzchok not fasted for him but, on the contrary, he had arranged a festive meal, he became very angry. He asked him, "How could you do this? Weren't you the one who gave me the idea in the first place?"

Rav Yitzchok answered, "Yes. I originally had planned on fasting. However, I then thought that if I fasted, that would do you no good. That wouldn't cause any commotion in Shomayim, as

it wouldn't be at all out of the ordinary for me to go without food. Therefore, I realized that it would be better for me to make a big meal, which is very unusual for me and would cause a commotion in Shomayim. They would wonder how I managed to arrange such a meal, and it would be discovered that you had given *tzedakah* to my family. And this *zechus* would lead to your *refuah*."

Rav Yissochor Dov says that this was Mordechai's intent. If he would declare a fast on a regular day, it wouldn't create any commotion in Shomayim, as it is common for Klal Yisroel to fast when faced with danger. But since Pesach is usually a time of rejoicing, when no one fasts, he specifically established the fast on this day so that they would ask in Shomayim why the people were not celebrating as usual, and it would be answered that

Mordechai had declared a day of fasting and praying for the salvation of Klal Yisroel.

The Tiferes Shlomo (Yom Bais L'Pesach) also asks why Mordechai declared the fast on the first day of Pesach, rather than waiting a day until Chol Hamoed. He answers similarly that on the first night of Pesach, when *tzadikim* eat *matzohs* and *marror*, relate the story of *yetzias Mitzrayim*, and do all the mitzvos of the day, they create a great commotion in Heaven, and the world can only exist when *tzadikim* create such tremendous *hashpa'os* in the Upper Worlds. By telling people to fast on Pesach, Esther and Mordechai were arousing Hashem's love for His nation by displaying to Him, so to speak, how empty every world would be without the mitzvos of Klal Yisroel. And, indeed, when the night of Pesach arrived and the Heavens were

missing those mitzvos, it created a great commotion and aroused Hashem's mercy.

In this vein, he explains the *pasuk* that says that "on that night, the king's sleep was disturbed." Chazal (Megillah 15B) say that this refers to Hashem, the King of the world. On that night, He was disturbed by the missing mitzvos, so He said "to bring His book of remembrances" of mitzvos that had been done in the past. He found written there that "Mordechai related", meaning that He remembered how Mordechai had related the Haggadah and performed the mitzvos of Pesach in the past, and this aroused His mercy.

### Segulos of Purim

#### Annuling Decrees:

Sefer Meor Vashemes (Parshas

Shekalim) writes that during the month of Adar “Hashem’s *chasadim* are revealed” and one can even “uproot harsh decrees by their roots.” In the days of Mordechai and Esther, Klal Yisroel merited being miraculously saved and granted new life. The influence of this miracle returns every year and allows for us to be miraculously saved from harsh decrees.

### **Purim Atones Even for Those Who Do Not Repent:**

It is stated in Tikunei Zohar (Tikun 21) that “Purim is named after Yom Kippur.” The Ruzhiner Rebbe *zy”a* (Ner Yisroel L’Purim) states that although it sounds from the words of the Zohar that Yom Kippur is greater than Purim – as Purim is only “named after” Yom Kippur – **“I say that Purim is even greater than Yom Kippur.”** He discerns

this from the fact that Yom Kippur is called Yom Kippurim – a day “like Purim” – which indicates that it is akin to Purim but not quite as great.

He explains why this is so by saying that the day of Yom Kippur only atones for those who do *teshuva* but not for those who don’t (as is stated in Rambam, Hilchos Shegagos 3:5 and Shulchan Aruch, Orech Chaim 606), whereas the day of Purim atones even for those who don’t do *teshuva*, as Chazal say (Yerushalmi Megillah 1:4): “Anyone who stretches out his hand is provided for”, even if he doesn’t deserve it.

We see that Chazal knew that the day of Purim is even more powerful than the day of Yom Kippur. How did Chazal know this? The Ruzhiner Rebbe explains that they discerned this from the *pasuk* that says (Esther 9:27): “They fulfilled it and they

accepted it.” Chazal (Megillah 7A) understand this to mean that what was accepted in this world was fulfilled Above. In this world, Klal Yisroel accepted to give Matanos l’evyonim to anyone who asked, without any investigation into whether or not he deserves it, and **in the Upper World, it was fulfilled that everyone would receive atonement, without investigating whether he deserves it or not.**

Chazal (Yoma 85B) do quote the opinion of Rebbe that Yom Kippur atones both for those who do *teshuva* and those who don’t. The Meor Einayim (Parshas Ha’azinu) asks how it is possible to say that Yom Kippur atones for those who don’t repent, as Chazal say (Bava Kama 50A) that “if one says that Hashem is forgiving (meaning that He forgives sins without the need for *teshuva*) he

relinquishes his life.”

He answers that, in truth, Yom Kippur does not atone for those who don’t do *teshuva*. The Gemara’s true intent is that, as the Zohar Hakadosh says, some sins are so great that they “damage the foundation of the world”, and those sins usually cannot be atoned for. On Yom Kippur, however, it is even possible to find atonement for sins that are normally “beyond *teshuva*”.

**It is known that when the Rebbe of Vilednik zy”a heard the Meor Einayim say these words, he related that he heard a pronouncement ring out from the Bais Din Shel Maaloh saying, “The halacha is like Nochum.”** (The Meor Einayim’s name was Rav Menachem Nochum of Chernobyl.)

We again see how Purim is greater than Yom Kippur in the

sense that Yom Kippur only atones for those who do *teshuva*, while Purim atones even for those who do not repent and **even for the type of *aveiros* that *teshuva* usually does not work for.**

### **Reaching the Level of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur:**

Sefer Divrei Yechezkel writes that the reason Purim is greater than Yom Kippur is because on Yom Kippur, only the Kohen Gadol reached the highest level of *kedusha*, but **on Purim every Jew can reach the same level of holiness that the Kohen Gadol reached on Yom Kippur.**

### **On Purim, One Can Even Ask for Luxuries:**

The *pasuk* states (Esther 9:12): “What is your request and I will give it to you, and what do you

ask for **additionally, and I will do it.”**

My grandfather, the Kreitchnifer Rebbe *zy”a*, explains that the word “additionally” (*od*) is reference to “*mosros*” (luxuries), which a person wants but does not really need to survive. Usually, it is difficult to ask Hashem for such things. However, **on the day of Purim all gates of Heaven are open to our prayers and one can even ask Him for luxuries.**

### **All the Year’s Tefillos Ascend:**

Alternatively, he explains the *pasuk* to mean that Purim is an auspicious time for all our *tefillos* and requests from the entire year to be accepted by Hashem, even if they were unable to ascend until now because it was not an “*eis ratzon*”.

### **The Tefillos Rise Above:**

The Kamarna Rebbe zy"va (Sefer Nidvos Pi, Moser Hashekalim, page 8) writes: "We have a tradition that on the day of Purim a simple soul can ascend to the chamber of a great *tzadik*, with nothing standing in his way. So too, all *tefillos* ascend to 'the *kesser*', with no obstructions... For this reason, Mordechai's name was changed after the miracle to 'Pesachya', to symbolize that all gates to Heaven were opened for everyone to ascend without being judged..."

### **All Sins Are Forgiven:**

Sefer Shem M'Shmuel (Parshas Tetzaveh 5675) writes that a decree was sealed to eradicate Klal Yisroel, as is stated (Esther 8:8): "And a letter that is written with the name of the king and sealed with the

king's seal cannot be rescinded." But they received new life from the Upper Worlds through the intermediaries of Mordechai and Esther. They were now considered to be like newborn babies, meaning that all their previous sins were no longer connected to them, and there can be no greater source of joy than this.

**This influence remains for all generations. On Purim, we are provided with new life, which fills our hearts with the greatest joy possible.**

### **Even a Rasha Can be Close to Hashem:**

Sefer Divrei Shmuel explains the words we recite in the song of Shoshanas Yaakov "and also Charvonah should be remembered for good", as follows:

Purim is a time when Hashem sends many good influences to the world. It is a blessed time that is in some ways loftier than all other days of the year, including Shabbos. Shabbos is a day that is “more blessed than all days and more holy than all times”, but Purim has its own unique level of holiness that enables every individual to draw close to Hashem. Even if a person is on the level of “Charvonah”, who is called a *rasha* (Megillah 16A), he can also be “remembered for good” on Purim. **On Purim, even the biggest *rasha* is instilled with goodness.**

### **Salvations Even for Those With no Merits:**

In Shoshanas Yaakov, we recite the words “*teshu’asam hayisa lanetzach v’sikvasam l’chol dor v’dor*”, their salvation

will be eternal and their hope will be for all generations. The Sefas Emes zy”a (Purim 5635) explains that the decree was to eradicate all Jews for all time. Accordingly, the salvation was an eternal miracle that affects all generations, as we all are only alive because of this miracle.

He adds that it is stated in Sefarim Hakedoshim that Hashem miraculously saved us even though we did not deserve it. He sent us our salvation solely because we are His beloved chosen nation and He desired to save us. **Therefore, this holiday is a day of hope and encouragement for us all, as it symbolizes how Hashem helps us and saves us simply because of his love for us.**

He concludes that this also may be the reason we are commanded to celebrate on Purim “until we don’t know the difference...” This symbolizes

that Hashem saves us out of His great love for us, even if we are undeserving and, so to speak, “do not know the difference between right and wrong.”

### Reading the Megillah

#### The Power of Every Word:

The Kedushas Levi expounds on the power of reading the Megillah and writes:

“One should be excited to hear the reading of the Megillah. When one hears it, he should ready himself to reaccept the yoke of Torah and mitzvos with joy. He should have in mind to purify all worlds, even this physical world, which is also purified by the reading of the Megillah. And he should rejoice to be able to create this purity and to fulfill the verse (Tehillim 104:34): ‘Hashem rejoices with His handiwork.’

“One should have in mind that every word of the Megillah creates illumination and that every word creates a *malach*. One should be excited to think about how every word causes Hashem to rejoice and make a new angel.... Hashem rejoices when the Jewish people read the Megillah and thereby purify all worlds and all souls. **Every word creates a nachas ruach for our Creator...** and Hashem instills into our hearts a desire to serve Him with a full heart and to observe the mitzvos...”

#### Hisorerus While Hearing the Megillah:

The Gemara (Megillah 19A) states: “From where does it (the Megillah) start? From the words ‘*v’yemei Purim he’ileh*’ (and these days of Purim). Rav Yehuda says: From the words “*ish Yehudi*” (a Jewish man).”

My grandfather, the Kretchnifer Rebbe zy" a (Kol Emunah, Pekudei 5760) explains that some people read the Megillah but are not inspired until they come to the *pasuk* of "ish Yehudi", but they do begin to feel excited when they reach this verse. Anyone who feels like this is praiseworthy, as he is better than those who don't feel inspired at all. Therefore, one should prepare himself in advance by studying Sefarim that create feelings of inspiration, so that he can feel excited during the reading of the Megillah and thereby bring about goodness for the world.

### **It Is Worthwhile to Hear the Megillah Even Once:**

One year on Purim, the Satmar Rov zy" a emotionally announced, "It is worthwhile to come to this world just to be

**here for one Purim and to hear the reading of the Megillah.**

For this alone, it was worth it for the entire world to be created. If the world had been created for one reading of the Megillah, that would have been sufficient."

### **Rectification for All Sins:**

The Rebbe of Vildenick zy" a states that the root of the word "Megillah" is "*gilui*" (revealed). This indicates that reading the Megillah rectifies the all sins that are "revealed" (including "*gilui arayos*").

Similarly, Sefer Ateres Yeshua (Nusach Hamegillah, Ois 52) writes that the reading of the Megillah can rectify all damage caused by our sins.

**Meriting Children, Life and Sustenance:**

The Gemara (Megillah 4B) states that “the eyes of the poor are uplifted with the reading of the Megillah.” Sefer Tiferes Shlomo zy”a explains that reading the Megillah creates *hashpa’os* that provide children, life and sustenance for Klal Yisroel. This is why there is a halacha (Shulchan Aruch, Orech Chaim 670:17) to spread out the Megillah like a letter, which symbolizes how these good influences spread around the world.

Sefer Ateres Yeshua (L’Purim, Ois 14) explains this Gemara by quoting Sefarim Hakedoshim (see Paneach Raza, Shaar Ha’amidah 20) that the first and last letters of the words “*poseach es yadecha*” (open Your hand) spell two names of Hashem that are auspicious for providing livelihood. The letters of the words “*al mikrah Megillah*” have the same numerical value

as those letters, which indicates that reading the Megillah creates the same type of *hashpa’os* for *parnassah*.

### **Bringing About Salvations:**

The Munkatcher Rebbe zy”a (Sefer Shaar Yissochor) writes that the word “Megillah” has the same *gematriah* as the word “*mazla*”. This is a hint that reading the Megillah can change a person’s mazel for the better and provide him with children, life and sustenance.

### **Inyanei Hamegillah**

#### **Preparing for Tefillah Through the Koach Hatorah:**

The *pasuk* states (Esther 9:25): “And when she came before the king, he commanded through a book that his evil thought that he had devised against the Jews

return upon his own head, and to destroy him and his sons on the gallows.”

Sefer Tiferes Shmuel quotes Sefarim Hakedoshim that say that the best way to avoid having distracting thoughts arise in one's head during davening is to study Torah before starting the *tefillah*. This idea is hinted to in this *pasuk*, which can be read as saying that when one goes to “the King” – a euphemism for Hashem – in order to daven, he should “command with a book”, meaning that she should learn from a sefer. In this way his “evil thoughts” which disturb his *tefillah* will be returned away from him and will no longer distract him.

### **A Segulah to Avoid Unwanted Thoughts:**

On this topic, it is known that the Vilna Gaon *zy”a* would

advise people to daven from a *siddur*, as this is a *segulah* to avoid distracting thoughts. This can also be discerned from this *pasuk* that can be read as saying that if one is “with the book” meaning that **he is reading from a siddur, his evil and distracting thoughts will be turned away.**

### **Waking Up at Midnight:**

The *pasuk* states (Esther 6:1): “On that night, the king's sleep was disturbed.” The Meor Vashemesh writes that this is a hint that everyone should wake up in the middle of the night to learn Torah and daven to Hashem. This is because the middle of the night is the time when Hashem is reveling with the souls of *tzadikim* in Gan Eden. At this time, He remembers their *zechusim*, which leads Him to be merciful to Klal Yisroel.

He concludes, “**Anyone who**

**makes the effort to get up at this time and immerse himself in Torah l'shma will have Hashem hear his voice. At this time, all zechusim are read before Him, and this shuts the mouths of the prosecutors.”**

### **The Power of Every Word and Thought:**

The Gemara states (Gittin 57B) that there were descendants of Haman who studied Torah in Bnei Brak. The Shem M'Shmuel (Parshas Tetzaveh 5680) writes that the reason Haman merited this reward was because, as the Medrash relates, when he was leading Mordechai on the horse through the city streets, he said, “I said in my tranquility that I will never falter. Hashem, with Your will, You set up my mountain to be might, You hid Your countenance and I became frightened. (Tehillim 30:7)”

The wicked Haman admitted that everything that occurred was from Hashem. When he did this, he awakened the good portion of himself that had been hidden within him, and it separated from the bad parts of him. This good portion left him and eventually was reincarnated in his descendants, who went on to study Torah.

The Shem M'Shmuel concludes, **“This teaches us that even if someone is in a very bad situation, he should know that even one good word or thought is very powerful. Even if it doesn't help him, it will come a day when it will be a strong help because one cannot imagine or describe how powerful these things are.”**

### **Tzedakah**

**The Power of Tzedakah on**

## Purim:

Sefer Ohr Hameir quotes Chazal (Yalkut Mishlei 942, see also Teshuvos Harashba, Chelek 1, 93) as saying that even after all other holidays are cancelled, Purim will remain. He explains that this is true because every year on Purim, the same illumination that occurred in the days of Mordechai and Esther is reawakened, and this will always be true.

He says that this is why there is a mitzvah to give *tzedakah* on Purim, as charity has the power to arouse this Divine light **and it has the ability to save us from the Satan and all forms of evil because “*tzedakah* saves from death.”**

## Giving Tzedakah With Joy:

The Kedushas Levi (Kedusha Shniya L’Purim) expounds at

length about the importance of giving *tzedakah* on Purim. He says that although one should give charity all year, one should be especially joyful when giving *tzedakah* on Purim because when one shows kindness to a poor man on Purim, Hashem acts kindly in turn to him, to all living beings and to all Divine entities. This causes an increase in joy in all worlds.

He quotes the Baal Shem Tov *zy”a* as explaining the *pasuk* in Tehillim (121:5) that states “Hashem is my shadow” to mean that just like a person’s shadows mimics what he does, Hashem mimics the way we act, so to speak. Therefore, if we treat others kindly and provide them with joy, He treats us kindly and gives us joy.

He goes on to say that this creates joy even in the Upper Worlds and **when the soul of the person who gave charity**

ascends to Heaven, all the angels and all the departed souls hug and kiss him in thanks for the joy that he created for them.

He concludes, “Praiseworthy is the man who creates a *nachas ruach* for his Creator and who is very happy to do all mitzvos, especially the mitzvah of *tzedakah* and *matanas l’evyonim*, and who gives it with much joy. Do not, *chas v’shalom*, think that you should be stingy because you are losing money when you give it away to the poor. Rather, **since you are doing *chesed* in all of the worlds, Hashem will increase your worth 1,000 times and He will bless you, as He has promised...** This is especially true because giving *matanos l’evyonim* creates a great abundance of goodness in this world...Therefore, since you are creating goodness in this world, **it is certain that you will**

receive wealth and honor in order to serve Him...”

### **Tzedakah Leads to Teshuva:**

The Noam Elimelech (Parshas Vayeishev) writes: “There are some people whose actions are corrupted. However, since they naturally have a good heart and an inclination to help others, they are drawn to do *teshuva*. This is as Dovid Hamelech says (Tehillim 23:6): ‘Only good and *chesed* pursues me all the days of my life and I will live in Hashem’s house for the length of my days.’ This means that even if the only thing one has is the *middah* of *chesed*, it will pursue him all his life and draw him to do *teshuva*.”

### **Tzedakah Atones for Sin:**

We learn from this that *tzedakah* and *chesed* has the

power to bring a person to do *teshuva* and atone for his sins. This is also seen from the *pasuk* (Daniel 4:24): “And your sins with *tzedakah* will be redeemed.” My grandfather, the Kretchnifer Rebbe zy”a states that this also hinted to in the Mishnah (Zevachim 5:8) that says that the blood of the Korban Pesach should be placed “*k’negged hayesod*” (on the foundation of the Mizbeach). This is a hint that ***tzedakah* can even atone for sins that affect the foundation of the world.**

## Matanos L’Evyonim

### In Memory of Moshe Rabenu:

The Medrash (Esther Rabbah 7) relates that Eliyahu Hanavi went to Moshe Rabenu and told him about Haman’s decree. He asked him to daven for the decree to be annulled. Moshe

replied, “Is there anyone in the world who will daven with me?”

Eliyahu told him, “There is a *tzadik* named Mordechai who will.”

Moshe asked Eliyahu to tell Mordechai to daven, and he did. Moshe and Mordechai davened at the same time and through their joint prayer, the nation was saved.

The Alshich Hakadosh (Esther 9:22) and the Ralbag write that because of this, **Mordechai decreed that Matanos L’Evyonim should be given every year on Purim for Moshe’s *neshama*.**

### Hashem Fulfills the Mitzvah of Matanos L’Evyonim:

Sefer Pri Tzadik (on Purim, Ois 1) writes that Hashem Yisborach fulfills all the mitzvos of the Torah. He fulfills the

mitzvah of Matanos L'Evyonim, and provides for anyone who stretches out his hand to Him **by sending yeshuos in all areas.**

### **Don't Give Up When Collecting Money:**

Purim is a time when many devoted people make the rounds, collecting money for various causes and Matanos L'Evyonim. It is, therefore, appropriate to relate the following story:

The Meor Einayim zy"ra would travel from city to city, collecting money for *pidyon shevuyim*. He once spent quite a while on the road, going from city to city, but he was not successful in raising the amount he needed. His *yeitzer hara* then began to assail him and say: You did the wrong thing. You wasted time that could have been spent learning Torah, and you didn't even gain anything from it. It would have

been better for you to remain at home, busy with your learning and davening. These thoughts led him to conclude that he should return home to Chernobyl at once.

On his way home, he stopped in a certain city and heard that a local Jew had been arrested for theft and was being held in prison. He was granted permission to visit the man, and he went to see him in jail. When he met the individual, he began to give him *mussar*. He said, "My son, look what you did to yourself. You transgressed the prohibition of theft, and, as a result, you are now locked up. You didn't benefit at all from your sin, and you ended up in jail. I hope that from now on, you won't steal anymore."

The thief replied, "So what if I got caught? If I didn't succeed this time, I will next time!"

When the Meor Einayim heard those words, he realized that they were relevant for him. This man didn't give up and was planning on stealing again; he certainly should not give up in his efforts to help others. If he didn't succeed this time, he certainly would succeed next time!

He went straight to the local tavern and asked the owner for a donation to help free the imprisoned man. When the tavern owner asked who the man was, the Meor Einayim told him his name. The tavernkeeper began to laugh and he said, "Rebbe, that man is a boor and a drunkard. Why would you spend your time trying to help a person like that?"

The Meor Einayim remained silent, choosing not to answer the question.

Before he went to sleep, he

was accustomed to learn Ein Yaakov with his attendant. That night, he asked the tavern owner to join them.

When the tavernkeeper arrived, the Meor Einayim began to read and explain the story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza (Gittin 55B). He explained like this: "Kamtza' is a reference to wealthy men, as most of them are '*kamtzanim*' (stingy). 'Bar Kamtza' is a reference to poor men, most of whom are spendthrifts. Yerushalaim was destroyed due to their actions.

He continued reading the Gemara that says that there was man who loved Kamtza, meaning that he loved the rich, and he despised Bar Kamtza, meaning that he hated the poor. This man made a festive meal and told his attendant to invite Kamtza, meaning to invite a rich man. The attendant, however, mistakenly invited Bar Kamtza,

a poor man.

When the host saw the poor man, he wanted to throw him out. The poor man said that he would pay for what he had eaten and drank. He asked that he not be publicly shamed but the host refused. He hated poor people so much that he couldn't stand having one in his house.

The poor man then offered to pay for half of the entire cost of the feast but the host still refused. He offered to pay for the entire feast and was even willing to sell himself as a slave so as not to be humiliated in public but the host still said no, and he took him by the hand and threw him out.

The poor man said that since there were Rabbanim present who did not protest, they must have agreed to embarrass him. The Gemara says that he then went to speak to the king. The Meor Einayim explained this to

mean that he went to speak to Hashem, the King of the world. He told Hashem, "The Jews are rebelling against you."

Hashem asked, "What proof do you have of this?"

The poor man said that he should "send a *korban*." He was referring to a poor person, whom the Zohar Hakadosh refers to as *korban*. He said that they should see if they accept the *korban* with a smile, meaning that they accept a poor person into their homes.

It then says that he made a blemish in the *korban*. This symbolizes how rich people see blemishes in the poor. They may claim that they speak badly of others or that they are drunkards or immoral people. But they only see such blemishes in the poor, and not in other wealthy people.

This lesson made its way into

the rich man's heart and he gave a generous donation.

## Mishloach Manos

### Hashem Fulfills the Mitzvah of Mishloach Manos:

Rav Yechezkel of Shinova zy" a writes (Divrei Yechezkel Hachadash, in the name of the Pri Tzadik) that just like Hashem fulfills all mitzvos, He also fulfills the mitzvah of Mishloach Manos. How does He fulfill this mitzvah? **By providing Klal Yisroel on this day with mechilah, selicha, kaparah, children, life and livelihood.**

He says that when the *pasuk* says (Esther 9:22) that Mishloach Manos are sent "*ish l'rayahu*", from a man to his friend, **the Man being referred to is Hashem, who sends "gifts" on this day to His "friend", which is Klal Yisroel.**

### Helping Overcome the Yeitzer Hara:

In this vein, the Bais Avrohom (L'Purim) explains the words "anyone who stretches out his hand (*poshet yad*), give to him" by saying that the words "*poshet yad*" can mean two different things. It can be referring to someone who guards his hands to make sure they don't do anything bad or harm others in any way. Such a person is given the ability to stretch out his hands to Hashem to request what he needs, and it will be given to him.

Alternatively, it can be referring to someone who uses his hands to harm others. Since his hands are impure, he "stretches them out", so to speak, to show Hashem that he does not have good hands, and he asked Him to switch the hands he has

with good, pure hands. Such a person also has his request answered on Purim and he is given “new hands”.

It says in one *pasuk* in Megillas Esther (9:25) that Achashveirosh ordered to “return his evil thought that he had devised against the Jews.” Another *pasuk* states (8:7) that Achashveirosh ordered Haman to be hanged “because he laid a hand on the Jews.” This is a hint that some people have a strong *yeitzer hara* that causes them to have bad thoughts, while others are persuaded by the *yeitzer hara* to use their hands in a bad way. On Purim, Hashem helps them both. He sends “Mishloach Manos” to everyone who stretches out their hand, and helps them overcome both bad thoughts and bad actions.

### Saving the Soul:

Sefer Imrei Noam (L’Purim, Ois 34) writes that the letters of the word “Manos” can be an acronym for *V’hitzalta nafshi m’sheol tachtis*” (Tehillim 86:13: Save my soul from purgatory.) He says that this does not refer only to Purim. Rather, on any day of the year **Hashem gives “Manos” (gifts) to every Jew by enabling our souls to be saved from the depths of depravity.**

### Drinking Wine

#### With Mesiras Nefesh:

The Sanzer Rov *zy”a* would quote his grandfather, the Chacham Tzvi *zy”a*, as saying that every time Chazal use the word “*chayav*” (one is obligated), it means that one must perform this obligation with *mesiras nefesh*. Accordingly, since Chazal say that one is *chayav* to celebrate on Purim until he

doesn't know the difference between "blessed is Mordechai and cursed is Haman", that means that **one must do this with self-sacrifice.**

### Like the Two Goats:

Sefer Ohev Yisroel writes that this is a puzzling obligation, as we don't find anywhere in the Torah that anything good came from the copious drinking of wine.

He goes on to explain that Esther invited Achashveirosh and Haman to a feast. He says that at that feast, Esther accomplished the same thing the Kohen Gadol accomplished when he sent out the two goats on Yom Kippur. He explains at length how Achashveirosh and Haman were akin to two goats and how Esther utilized this for the benefit of Klal Yisroel. He writes that we accomplish the

same thing when we drink wine on Purim. We also reach the level of the Kohen Gadol when he sent out the goats, which is why it is stated Purim is a day like Yom Kippur.

### Like Fasting for a Full Week:

Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Ziditchoiv zy"ra wrote in a letter to his *chasidim*: "I ask you to rejoice on the day of Purim. **Anyone who drinks on Purim is akin to one who fasts from Shabbos to Shabbos.**"

We can add to this that it is stated in Siddur Rebbe Shabsi (Segulos Hataanis): "If one wants to do *teshuva* but he is afraid that he won't live long enough to fast enough days to atone for his sins, he should commit to hastening his *teshuva* by fasting from Shabbos to Shabbos, as this has the same value as 65,000 fasts."

Accordingly, when one drinks and celebrates on Purim, which is considered like fasting from Shabbos to Shabbos, **it is a tremendous source of atonement for his sins.**

### Creating Success in Business:

Sefer Yitav Panim explains the words of the Gemara (Eruvin 82B) “*ravcha l'vesumei shchiach*” (which literally means that there is always room in the

stomach for sweets) in a lighthearted way.

The *pasuk* states (Esther 4:14): “*Revach v'hatzalah ya'amod laYehudim.*” (Abundance and rescue will arise for the Jews.) Today, one can receive this abundance of goodness by fulfilling the obligation to drink and celebrate on Purim. Accordingly, the Gemara says that “*ravcha*”, a great abundance, goes to those who are “*besumei*” on Purim.

## Parshas Ki Sisa

פִּי תִשָּׂא אֶת רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְקֻדֵיהֶם וְנָתַנוּ אִישׁ כֶּפֶר נַפְשׁוֹ לֵה' וּגְוִ' (ל),  
(ב)

When you count the heads of the children of Yisroel according to their numbers, and each man will give to Hashem an atonement for his soul...(30:12)

### Not Lacking Anything:

The Baal Haturim notes that the word “*v'nasnu*” is a palindrome, meaning that it is read the same forwards and

backwards. This teaches us that when one gives money to tzedakah, it will eventually come back to him and he will not lose anything by giving.

In the Tur (Yoreh Deah 247) he adds: “No one ever became poor as a result of giving *tzedakah*, and no bad thing or damage came from his hand... No one should that he will lose by giving *tzedakah*... because **it is tried and tested that one who gives *tzedakah* doesn't lose anything. On the contract, he increases his wealth and prestige.**” The Medrash (Shemos Rabbah 33:3) also says that one who gives *tzedakah* will not lose anything.

### **The More One Gives, the More he Receives:**

The Shinover Rov *zy"á* (Sefer Divrei Yechezkel) relates an incredible story on this topic:

Rav Menachem Mendel of Rimanov *zy"á* once gave a certain man a *bracha* that he should become wealthy. Indeed, the man became incredibly rich.

Rav Naftali of Ropshitz *zy"á* asked the Rimanover Rebbe, “Why did you bless one man to obtain so much wealth? Wouldn't it be better to give a little bit of money to many different people so that all of them at least have enough to live on?”

The Rimanover answered, “I never said how much money this man should have. I just blessed him with wealth. I never said if he would get a little wealth or a lot of wealth. The reason he got so much is because when he got a little money, he gave much of it away to *tzedakah*. Since he gave *tzedakah*, the money came back to him. And since he keeps giving *tzedakah*, money keeps coming back to him. The more he gives, the wealthier he becomes.

**“Since he gives money to *tzedakah* without any limit, Hashem sends him unlimited money.”**

## Redeemed From Sin Through Tzedakah:

The Shinover Rov adds that the *yeitzer hara* tries to convince a person not to give *tzedakah* by reminding him how hard he had to work to earn his money. It asks him: Why should you just give away the money that you toiled for and put your own life on the line to obtain?

To counter this claim, the Torah tells us that *tzedakah* is a “*kofer nefesh* to Hashem.” **A person should know that by giving *tzedakah*, he is redeeming his life from the sins he committed before Hashem.** As the *pasuk* says (Daniel 4:24), one’s sins are redeemed through *tzedakah*; therefore, one can dispute the *yeitzer hara* by telling it that he must give *tzedakah* in order to live.

The Chida *zt”l* writes that

*tzedakah* atones even for intentional sins. It thus makes sense that one can tell his *yeitzer hara*: I work hard for my money but I am giving it away to serve as a *kaparah* for my soul and to be saved from any bad thing that may have been decreed against me.

## Uplifting “All Four Hands”:

When one gives *tzedakah*, it is considered as if gave all his money – even the money he kept for himself – and sanctified it all for a holy purpose. This is seen from the Tanya (Likutei Amarim 34), where it is stated, “Giving a *chomesh* (one-fifth of one’s income) uplifts all ‘four hands’ (the four portions the individual keeps for himself) to Hashem... By giving one-fifth to *tzedakah*, all the rest of the money becomes holy. This is as Chazal say that

giving *tzedakah* is like bringing a *korban*, and when one brings a *korban* every part of the animal is sanctified to Hashem...”

### **Even Sinners Will be Moser Nefesh for Hashem:**

Rav Meir of Premishlan zy”a explains the *pasuk* to be speaking about the *geulah* and saying that when Hashem will take us out of exile and rectify the world, then **“every man will give a *kofer* of his soul to Hashem” – meaning that even a complete *kofer* (heretic) will be ready to be *moser nefesh* and give himself over to Hashem.**

### **In the Merit of Tzedakah, the Redemption Will be Merciful:**

Sefer Imrei Noam explains the *pasuk* by citing the words of the

Zohar Hakadosh (Chelek 2, 7B). The Zohar says that before Moshiach’s arrival, Klal Yisroel will experience a period known as “*chevlei Moshiach*”, which will be a time of much suffering. The Arizal says, however, that this will only occur if the redemption happens at the set time described by the Zohar. If his arrival is delayed, there will be no additional suffering. Rather, the *geulah* will be merciful.

The Gemara (Bava Basra 10A) says that *tzedakah* hastens the redemption. This means that even if the *geulah* is supposed to be delayed in order to avoid further suffering, **it can still arrive earlier in the merit of *tzedakah*.**

This explains the *pasuk* (Yeshaya 1:27) that says that “Tzion will be redeemed with justice and its returners (*shaveha*) with *tzedakah*.” This can be

understood to mean that the redemption of Yerushalaim should really be with strict judgment and suffering. However, through the power of *tzedakah*, the judgment can be turned away and the redemption will instead be merciful.

With this in mind, he understands the word “*pekudeihem*” to be a reference to the *geulah* (as the word *pakod* can mean “to remember”, and thus be a reference to the time when Hashem will remember

and redeem us.) The *pasuk* is saying that the way to hasten the redemption is for everyone to give a *kaparah* for his soul by giving *tzedakah*. The *pasuk* then says that “then there will be no plague among them when they are *pakud* (which he understands to mean ‘when they are redeemed’). This means that **since the *geulah* was hastened due to the giving of *tzedakah*, it will be without any pain and suffering.**

זֶה יִתְּנוּ כָּל הָעֶבֶר עַל הַפְּקָדִים מִחֲצִית הַשֶּׁקֶל וְגו' (ל, יג)

This they shall give, everyone who goes through the counting: half a shekel of the holy shekel... (30:13)

## Wealth in the Merit of Tzedakah:

Sefer Tiferes Shlomo notes that when we look at the words we recite in davening on Shabbos: “*Tovim me’oros shebara Elokeinu*” (the

illuminations created by our G-d are good) we can see that the first and last letter of the word “*me’oros*” are “*mem tes*”, which spells the word “*meis*” (dead). In between those letters, is the word “*ohr*” (light). This indicates that a *tzadik* – a light to the word, has

the power to separate us from death and transform bad things into good.

So too, in the word “*machatzis*”, the word “*chatzi*” separates the letters *mem* and *ches*. This indicates that the *machatzis hashekel* is an atonement for Klal Yisroel that saves from death.

Even during times of exile, when we do not have this mitzvah, we can give as much *tzedakah* as we can in order to merit this atonement. The *pasuk* says (Shemos 21:35): “And divide the money received for it, and they shall also divide the dead body.” If one gives away half of his money to *tzedakah*, death will be divided for him, meaning that his life will be saved **and he will merit to live long.**

Rashi states that Moshe Rabenu was shown a fiery coin and told “like this is what they should give.”

The Kotzker Rebbe *zy”a* (Sefer Emes V’Emunah) explains that Moshe was puzzled how a single small coin could atone for a person’s soul. Hashem explained by the showing him a coin made of fire. This was meant to teach him that **even if one only gives a half-shekel to *tzedakah*, if he gives it with fire and enthusiasm it will atone for him.**

We see from this that the main *kaparah* is not from the coin itself. Rather, it is from the fire and enthusiasm with which it is given, which leads the giver to rectify his ways and stay on the correct path.

**Overcoming the Yeitzer  
Hara:**

**Giving With Enthusiasm:**

The Kobriner Rebbe zy"ra also asks why Moshe couldn't understand on his own what the half-shekel was until Hashem showed him a coin made of fire and answers that what troubled Moshe was that he couldn't comprehend how a person could give such a small donation and that is sufficient to atone for all of his sins.

Hashem answered by showing him a coin made of fire. By doing so, he was showing him how the fire of the *yeitzer hara* burns on every coin and tries to convince a person not to use it for a mitzvah. When a person sits down to give charity, this fire often starts to burn and to try to impede them from giving. This is because the *yeitzer hara* does all it came to prevent a person from giving *tzedakah*. If someone is able to overcome this fire and give his money away to others in need, he has

done a very powerful thing. **Even if he only gives one small coin, he has succeeded in overpowering the *yeitzer hara*, and, therefore, he has accomplished something great and deserves to receive atonement for his sins.**

### **Those Who Transgress Must Give:**

When Rav Shayala of Keres'ir zy"ra first began leading his flock, many Yidden began to flock to him to receive his blessings. Amongst them were irreligious Jews who did not observe Torah and mitzvos, who would give money as a "*pidyon nefesh*". He was unsure if he should accept this money or refuse to take it.

At that time, Rav Mordchele of Nadvorna zy"ra, who was very close to Rav Shayala and supported his holy work, visited

the city of Kereshtir. Rav Shayala went to see him and asked his advice. As soon as he entered the house, Rav Mordechele said, "My uncle, Rav Meir (of Premishlan) and his father, my grandfather Rav Uren Leib of Premishlan, had a discussion regarding whether a rebbe must take impure money. My uncle said that one should not take it, while my grandfather said that one may take it. And I say that one must take it."

Rav Mordechele then said, "This is the meaning of the words '*kol ha'over al hapekudim yitnu*'. Even if one transgresses the laws of Hashem, he must give."

Rav Shayala said, "I actually came to hear your opinion on this exact topic!"

Rav Mordchele responded, "Don't think that I have *ruach hakodesh*. Rather, Hashem puts

into my mouth the words that need to be heard at the moment."

Rav Mordchele told him Rav Shayala that he should to accept *pidyonos* from whomever offered him one, and he should purify the money by using it for good purposes.

### **Ruach Hakodesh to Know How to Use the Money:**

Although a *tzadik* must take money from every donor, he also must use the money wisely. It is related (Yalkut M'orei Ohr, page 68) that after the *petirah* of the Magid of Chernobyl *zy" a*, his son, the Magid of Trisk *zy" a*, began traveling far and wide, visiting many villages and small towns. When he passed through the city of Trisk, he saw an area on the outskirts of the city that covered in mud and soil, with a flow of water dribbling through

it. He said, "This is where I will live."

And so it was. He built his bais medrash and court on that spot. It goes without saying that it cost quite a bit more to build upon such rough ground than it would have to erect a building on smooth land. The *chasidim* couldn't understand why the rebbe specifically wanted to build on that land, but no one dared to question him.

Some time later, the Magid came to the city of Kavla, where he met with his uncle, Rav Yitzchok of Neshchiz zy" a. Rav Yitzchok asked him why he spent so much money to build his bais medrash on rough land, and the Magid responded as follows:

He said that when Betzalel built the Mishkan, Hashem granted him a spirit of wisdom to know and understand. This

means that he granted him *ruach hakodesh*, as is stated in Rashi (31:3). Why did he need *ruach hakodesh* to do this work? Why wasn't it enough to be master craftsman and builder?

The answer is that there were three types of Jews who gave donations for the Mishkan. Some people donated wholeheartedly, with their sole desire being to serve Hashem. Others intended to fulfill Hashem's commandment, but they also wanted to get credit for themselves. Yet others really didn't want to give at all. They only gave because they felt forced to do so.

Betzalel needed *ruach hakodesh* to know each person's intentions. He used the money donated by those with the purest intentions for the holiest parts of the Mishkan, and used the money given with less pure intentions for less holy items.

The Magid concluded, “So, I only wanted to build the holiest parts of my bais medrash from donations given with pure intentions. That money was used

for the sefer Torah, Aron Hakodesh, *bima*, etc. The rest of the money was used for the muddy and dirty places...”

וְשָׁמְרוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת וּגְו' (לא, טז)

And the children of Yisroel shall observe Shabbos... (31:16)

### Keeping One Shabbos Leads to Keeping Two:

Chazal say (Shabbos 118B) that if Klal Yisroel would keep just two Shabbosim, we would immediately be redeemed.

The Kedushas Levi zy”a explains that if a person keeps Shabbos properly, he derives strength to serve Hashem all throughout the next week. And when a person serves Hashem all week, it is easier for him to properly observe the next Shabbos. And this goes on week after week.

This answers a seeming contradiction. It says in the Yerushalmi (Taanis 1:1) that if

Klal Yisroel would keep one Shabbos, they would immediately be redeemed, which seems to contradict the Bavli that says we must keep two Shabbosim. The answer is that if we would keep one Shabbos properly, we would acquire the strength to serve Hashem all week and easily keep the next Shabbos. Thus, the main thing is to properly observe one Shabbos.

This is hinted to in the words of this *pasuk*: “And Yisroel shall observe Shabbos to make Shabbos.” We need to observe one Shabbos and then we will easily be able to make the next Shabbos.

כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה ה' אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת  
וַיִּנְפְּשׁ: (לא, יז)

For Hashem made the Heaven and earth in six days and on the seventh day He ceased and rested. (31:17)

## Utilizing Every Moment With the Neshama Yeseira:

Chazal (Beitzah 16A) learn from this *pasuk* that a person receives a “*neshama yeseira*” (extra soul) on Shabbos, which leaves him on Motzoei Shabbos. The Gemara sees this from the words “*Shabbos vayinafash*”, which it understands to mean that since it was Shabbos and the day is now over “*vai vayniafash*” – woe for the *nefesh* (the *neshama yeseira*) that is leaving.

The Baal Shem Tov *zy”a* asks why we recite this verse right at the beginning of Shabbos. Why do we speak about the *neshama yeseira* leaving when Shabbos is just beginning?

He answers that we say these

words at the beginning of Shabbos to remind us that the *neshama yeseira* will not be with us forever. We remind ourselves that it will leave right after Shabbos ends and it won’t be with us during the upcoming weekdays. This adds to our love of Shabbos and brings us to make sure to fully utilize every moment we have with our extra *neshama* to serve Hashem and not to waste a moment.

## The Precious Gift of Shabbos:

One Shabbos, Rav Shmelke of Nickolsberg *zy”a* related a story (related in Sefer Birchas Aharon-Karlin, page 122) that occurred during the week.

He said that a poor man had

come to his door and asked for a donation. He had nothing to give him, so he looked around the house until he found a nice ring that belonged to his Rebbitzen. He took the ring and gave it to the pauper.

When the Rebbitzen came home and was told what her husband had done, she began to scream, “You gave him a ring that is worth 24 gold coins?”

When Rav Shmelke heard this, he got up and ran after the poor man. The man saw Rav Shmelke pursuing him and thought he wanted to take the ring bag, so he began to run away from him.

The Rebbe, however, was faster. He caught up to the pauper and told him, “You should know that this ring is worth 24 gold coins. Don’t sell it for less!”

He used this story to explain the Gemara (Shabbos 10B) that says that Hashem told Moshe that He had a precious gift in His treasury that is called Shabbos and He wants him to give it to the Jewish people and to tell them that it is very valuable. **Hashem wanted Moshe to tell them this so they should know that they shouldn’t trade it in for a glass of whiskey and a piece of kugel.**

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶהְרֹן פָּרְקוּ נְזָמֵי הַזָּהָב אֲשֶׁר בְּאַזְנֵי וְגו' (ב, ב)

And Aharon said to them, “Remove the golden rings that are in your ears...and bring them to me. (32:2)

### Aharon’s Intention Was to Save the Nation:

Sefer Chemda Genuzah, (Chelek 2) relates: I heard from

Rav Tevli of Dukla *zt”l* that when he was 11-years-old, he was in the presence of Rav Yoel of Shotz *zy”a*, the son-in-law of Rav Meir of Permishlan *zy”a*.

Rav Yoel asked him, “How are you doing?” Rav Tevli answered that he had been up all night because he was so bothered by the story of the *eigel hazahav*. How could such a great *tzadik* like Aharon Hakohen make an *eigel*?

Rav Yoel answered him by saying that he would explain the story of the *eigel* with a *moshol*: A king once planted a very beautiful garden, which grew fine fruit. This king had an only son. One day, the king traveled away from home. While he was gone, his son went into the garden and destroyed all of the trees and fruits. When the king returned home and saw what his son had done, he became very angry. He told him, “I will forgive you this time. But if it happens again, I will punish you.”

The king then had his garden fixed.

A while later, the king left home again. Once again, his son went into the garden and destroyed the trees. When the king got home, he became irate, but he said, “I will forgive you this time as well, but I promise you that if you do this again, I will kill you!”

The next time the king left home, the son went into the garden once more, with intentions of destroying it. A friend of the king saw him, realized what he was about to do, and said, “Do you really want to break the trees so much that you can’t hold yourself back? Let me do it for you. You stay inside and don’t do anything.”

The friend’s intentions were to save the prince’s life. He knew that the king would fulfill his promise and kill his son, which would later cause him a lot of anguish. Therefore, he felt that it

would be better for him to do than for the prince to do it.

This is also what Aharon did. He knew that Klal Yisroel had already sinned numerous times and, if they would sin again, Hashem would not forgive them. Therefore, he hurried to make the *eigel* himself in order to save them.

And he said, “Why, Hashem, should Your anger be kindled against Your people whom You have brought up from the land of Egypt with great power and with a strong hand?” (32:11)

### The Influence of Mitzrayim:

וַיָּשָׁב מֹשֶׁה אֶל ה' וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי חָטָא חָטָא הָעַם הַזֶּה חָטָאָה גְּדֹלָה וְגו' (לב, לא)

And Moshe returned to Hashem and said: “Please! This people has committed a grave sin. They have made themselves a god of gold.” (32:31)

### Their Hearts Were Not Under Their Control:

Rav Itzikel of Vorka zy”a

Why did Moshe mention that Hashem took Klal Yisroel out of Egypt with great power? If he was trying to defend Klal Yisroel, how was this a defense?

The Alshich Hakadosh explains that Moshe was saying that Hashem should not be surprised that the nation was drawn to idol worship because they had been in Egypt, the most idolatrous land in the world, for many years. As a result, they had fallen to the 49<sup>th</sup> level of impurity and, in order to leave, Hashem had to use His great power and strong hand. Therefore, it was unsurprising that they had sinned in this way and they should not be harshly punished for it.

(quoted in Sefer Yeshishim Chochmah) asks: Moshe Rabenu was asking for mercy for the

nation. Why did he mention that “the people committed a grave sin”? Wouldn’t bringing up their sin make matters worse?

He answers that Moshe was defending Klal Yisroel by saying that they certainly did not sin deliberately because the sin itself was so big that they couldn’t possibly have had the ability to do it. They had just stood by Har Sinai and heard Hashem’s voice directly, and definitely would not have committed such a grave sin. He said that Hashem must have caused the sin to occur and the people were not in control of their actions. Therefore, they should not be punished.

This is, in fact, stated in the Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 4B): “Rav Yehoshua ben Levi said

that Yisroel only made the *eigel* in order to open the door for *baalei teshuva...*” Rav Yochanon further stated that Dovid was not holding by such a sin (with Bas-sheva) and Klal Yisroel was not holding by committing such a sin...He says that these sins were caused to occur so that people who sinned in the future would know that they could do teshuva.

Rashi explains that Klal Yisroel were in control of the *yeitzer hara* and it should not have been able to overpower them. Rather, it was Hashem’s decree that they should lose control of themselves in order to help sinners of the future and teach them that they can do teshuva.

**יְעַתְּהָ אִם תִּשָּׂא חַטָּאתָם וְאִם אֵין מִחַנִּי נָא מִסְפָּרֶךָ וְגו' (לב, לב)**

**And now, if You forgive their sin. But if not, erase me now from Your book. (32:32)**

## No One Else to Rely On:

The Dubno Magid *zt"l* explains this *pasuk* with a *moshol*:

There once was a high-ranking minister who had a relative who was arrested numerous times for stealing from the king's treasure house. Every time he was arrested, the minister would speak in his defense and use his connections to set him free without punishment. This thief once went too far and stole a very substantial amount of money from the king's treasury, and the minister couldn't come up with any way to save him from judgment.

He approached the king and

וַיִּשְׁמַע הַמֶּלֶךְ וְגו' וַיִּתְאַבְּלוּ וְלֹא שָׁתוּ אִישׁ עֲדָיו עָלָיו (לג, ד)

The people heard this news...they mourned, and no one put on his finery. (33:4)

## Depression Causes Sin:

Sefer Tiferes Yisroel (Perek 1, Ois 17) quotes Rav Shraga

said, "Your majesty, I request to be relived of my position."

The king was surprised by this request and asked for an explanation. The minister said, "My relative always depends on me to save him when he steals. That's why he keeps stealing. If I quit my job, there will be no one to speak on his behalf, and he will stop stealing."

This is what Moshe Rabenu said to Hashem. "Erase my name from Your book." Klal Yisroel depends on me to speak to You on their behalf. Therefore, I ask to be taken out of the picture so that they will have no one to rely on and, therefore, will stop sinning.

Feivel of Gritza *zy"á* (the father of Rav Yechiel of Alexander *zy"á* and grandfather of the

Yismach Yisroel zy"á) as relating that the first time he went to see the Chozeh of Lublin zy"á, the Chozeh spoke about this *pasuk*. He said that we see from the verse that the people's main sin was the fact that they mourned and became depressed after they sinned. He translated the words "*v'lo shasu ish es adav alav*" to mean that they didn't take to heart the fact that they were still holy people, who are an adornment of finery to Hashem, and they should move forward, leaving the past in the past.

After hearing this explanation, Rav Shraga Feivel decided to connect himself with the Chozeh and he became very close to him.

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