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The Sweet Pleasure of *Bitachon*

Chovos HaLevavos, Introduction to Sha'ar HaBitachon.

The ba'al bitachon will feel joy in every situation in his life, because he trusts in Hashem that He will only do what is good for him—just as a compassionate mother does for her child in bathing him and so forth, as Dovid HaMelech said, אֲנִי נִפְשִׁי לֹא שׁוֹיֵיתִי וְדוֹמָמְתִּי נִפְשִׁי כַּגְּמוּל עָלַי אִמּוֹ כַּגְּמוּל עָלַי נִפְשִׁי I swear that I stilled and silenced my soul like a suckling child at his mother's side, like the suckling child is my soul" (Tehillim 131:2).

The Appropriate Solution in Trying Times Is to Change Ourselves

Pain Comes from Within

Previously, we discussed the words of the Piasezna Rebbe in *Hachsharas HaAvreichim*, in which he explains that any emotions—whether joy or pain—don't come from the surrounding circumstances, the events that happen to us. What we feel is our *nefesh* being awakened (or “triggered”) by those events. When the *nefesh* encounters an occurrence, it causes an internal reaction—and this is what we feel.

So long as a person hasn't perfected his *bitachon*, he may feel pain caused by things that irk him. For example, he awaits a *yeshuah* (for children, *shidduchim*, *parnasah*, etc.) and it hurts.... He feels pain, not only because the salvation has yet to arrive, but because he feels somewhat

bitter: “**Why does he have and I don’t... why am I always the shlimazel?**” There’s so much pain and confusion here.

When we analyze it, what is the real source of this pain? Can we say that the root of the pain is in the surrounding *matzav*?! Is the pain caused by the very reality itself that something is missing in his life? Of course not! Nothing in the world can bring a person such bitterness. **External events can only trigger a feeling within the *nefesh* to a certain feeling.** And when the *nefesh* is affected, it may feel the emotion of pain. **Thus, clearly, the pain is rooted within a person’s *nefesh*,** not in the technical reality.

Superficial Compliments Don’t Help

A good example of this is when we encounter an overly sensitive person—he becomes insulted by the tiniest negative comment, and he always assumes that we’re talking about him. **Whenever you tell him anything, you always need to apologize...**

How can we help such a person? Can we ensure that he will never become offended? Can we ensure that he will constantly be showered with compliments? “You’re amazing... you’re wonderful... you’re the wisest person who ever lived!”

Surely, this wouldn’t work. First, if we approach it this way, he will never mature or improve. The root of his problem will never be addressed. Second, it’s completely unrealistic to shield a person from any criticism or offence. **Every person, during his life, will hear offensive comments.** Third, if we shower him constantly with compliments, his problem will become exacerbated—because he will sense that they’re not genuine or factual. “They’re just trying to be *mechazek* me,” he’ll think.

Investigating the *Nefesh*

So, how *can* we help such a person? We all understand that the only way to help him is to dig into his *nefesh* and investigate why this person is so sensitive. Why does he become so deeply affected by everything that he hears? **Why does he lie in bed all day because he thinks that**

someone is looking at him the wrong way? Can it be due to an experience that he endured in his youth? Is he depressed or broken from something else that is causing him to be so sensitive?

We can help him by taking him to a professional... or another wise person—together with a *Tehillim*, of course. But **it is clear to all that this issue must be addressed at its source.** If the problem isn't addressed at the root, he will never extricate himself from it. It is an internal problem—and it must be treated as such.

Addressing Our Inner *Galus*

This teaches us a tremendous *yesod*: **Whenever a person feels pain and anguish, the problem really is internal, in his heart and in his soul.** It doesn't matter what *circumstances* a person endures—if he feels pained by it, the pain is centered in his heart. **That is where his personal *galus* resides.** It is only that everything around him *triggers* and *awakens* his inner pain.

If so, what is the remedy? There's only one solution: to speak and *daven* to the Ribbono shel Olam **that our inner attitudes, feelings, and emotions should become positive!** Our primary prayer should not be for the *Aibishter* to take away the circumstances or for Him to change our surroundings—He may often do that as well—but our main supplication and *tefillah* must be: **"Ribbono shel Olam! Please help me to accept things more easily, so that I will see my situation with clarity and *emunah*...."**

Davening for Clear *Emunah*

For Our Eyes to Be Open to This Truth

There's a well-known *tefillah* by Rebbe Meir'1 of Apta. Many of us know the opening words, which have been put to a song רבון העולמים ביד היוצר ... וגם אם אתאמץ בעצות ותחבולות... *Master of the World, I know that I am but like clay in the potter's hand... and even if I will exert myself with schemes and tactics, and all the people of the world will stand*

with me... there is no salvation or deliverance but for You. This first part of the *tefillah* is the proclamation of the fundamentals of our *emunah* – but then comes the essence of our supplication:

It continues: לכן עזרנו רבון העולמים להיות עיני פתוחות לראות תמיד אמיתות, *Therefore, help me, Master of the World, so that my eyes will always be open to seeing the truth of this matter, and that my belief in You should always be rooted and embedded in my heart.* Once this light is etched on my heart, I will never have any pain or sorrow. Not only will the problems go away, but I will have pleasure. I will have everything that I need!

Suffering Comes from Lack of *Emunah*

A tremendous *yesod* lies within these words: When a person goes through a situation that causes him pain, it's not the *situation* that caused the internal pain. It's the exact opposite! The external circumstances are *fed* and *sustained* by the pain he feels internally. **The true root of the suffering is in the depths of our *nefesh*!**

They feed off each other: There's a problematic situation taking place, and it's affecting me. Since I haven't yet perfected my *bitachon*, **my inner *nefesh* is awakened and triggered by those outside events, causing me tremendous pain.** But now, *because* I feel the tremendous pain, the *tzarah* that is outside of me derives *chiyus* from the pain, and it can't go away.

Thus, the emotions of sadness in our heart infuse life into the *tzarah*. **Our negative emotions are the root of all our problems.**

The Primary Prayer

For this reason, our primary emphasis in *tefillah* must be that Hashem should grant us the proper *emunah* in our hearts – and **this will automatically bring about a *yeshuah*, because this was the root of the entire problem all along!** If a person fortifies his heart with *emunah*, the ache in his heart will subside, and then the external problems will disappear as well – because their oxygen (the negative and sad thoughts and emotions) will have been cut off. **Rather than focus most of our davening**

on the problem, we must daven for the root of the problem: our lack of *emunah*.

The *Chovos HaLevavos* tells us the truth: The truth is that **if you daven for *emunah*, and you become infused with *emunah*, you will cut off the problem at the root.** The main problem resides in your heart! Chase the darkness away with the light of *emunah*! Daven to the Ribbono shel Olam: “Help me that I should have *emunah* and *bitachon*. That I should see things clearly, and that I should become close to You—**help me so that I won’t think so much about the problems, but rather focus on my own heart,** that my heart should be permeated with a true faith in You.”

The Traitor in Your Heart

Tzaddikim would say that during the *berachah* of תְּהִי תְקוּהָה, *that the traitors and slanderers shouldn’t affect us*, we should have in mind the traitor within our own heart: **“Ribbono shel Olam! Cut off all the *kelipos* that surround my heart, prevent me from seeing the world with clarity, and make me feel pain.”**

This lack of *emunah* brings us internal pain, which in turn causes external *tzaros*, which cause us even more pain internally... and so it goes. Let us therefore not be so preoccupied with the external issues, because they are only the effect, not the cause. They are not the primary issue.

The Pain of the *Shechinah* Plays Out in Your Heart

This is also the reason that tzaddikim exhorted us that when we experience suffering, we should daven for the pain of the *Shechinah*, which suffers along with us, as the Navi says, *בְּכָל צָרָתָם לֹא צָר*, *in all their troubles He was troubled* (Yeshayahu 63:9). The *Shechinah* feels pain, as it were, when a *Yid* struggles, and we should therefore daven for the pain of the *Shechinah*.

One may say, “I am not on the level to be davening for the pain of the *Shechinah*. When I have a problem, I daven for my own problems. That is an *avodah* for tzaddikim. What does it have to do with me?!”

The answer is, however, simple: Where is the *Shechinah* situated?! **The *Shechinah* resides in the heart of each and every Yid!** Our *neshamah* is חלק אלוה ממעל, *a literal part of Hashem*. And thus, when you're experiencing pain, *you're actually experiencing the pain that the Shechinah is experiencing inside you*. All the feelings of pain and disappointment are only coatings and layers over the true and deep pain of the *Shechinah* in your *neshamah*. If so, surely one must daven for this pain to go away. Daven that you should be able to strengthen yourself with *emunah*, and automatically, the problems will disappear.

Remedying the Root

Indeed, the *heiliger* Rebbe Reb Zusha said that he never davened for *tzaros* to go away; he davened to merit strong *bitachon*, and **when a Yid has strong *bitachon*, all the ache and the pain disappear automatically**. The surrounding problems aren't the issue here. We must resolve the root of the problem: our own hearts. And then everything will be good.

Sometimes, there's an institution in which the administrator isn't the right person for the job... this *mossad* now has a fundamental problem: There's no leader at the helm. This will cause all sorts of peripheral problems.

When the first dilemma arises, they'll try and patch it up. But then another problem pops up, and then another... and they're constantly busy patching up the problems that inevitably arise—until they realize that there's a fundamental problem, a deeper problem that must be resolved. Addressing the problems on a superficial level will not resolve them permanently.

The same applies to the problems that are rooted in our hearts—and the solution is to address the root cause by strengthening our *emunah* and *bitachon* and davening for it. The primary pain emanates from within—even when someone is actively causing you pain. Remember that everything is internal. Daven to the Ribbono shel Olam not to feel the pain in your heart.

Developing the Sweet Feeling of *Kirvas Elokim* Precisely in Times of Angst

Why the Splitting of the Sea Was Necessary

The Sfas Emes adds an important point to this conversation. He explains that when the *Yidden* left Egypt, it seemed as though they had gotten rid of the problem of Mitzrayim for good – but **one week later they found themselves right back under the Egyptian boots, being pursued with ferocity**. It was only after the Splitting of the Sea that they were rid of them forever.

Why did it need to be this way? Why didn't Hashem make one event that would rid Klal Yisrael of the Mitzriyim forever? The answer is, says the Sfas Emes, that the Ribbono shel Olam wanted the *Yidden* to be redeemed through *emunah* – that they should attain a level of clarity so that they would see that nothing around them matters, and they would truly recognize that the Ribbono shel Olam conducts His world with mercy and compassion and does everything for their good.

Hashem wanted the *Yidden* to feel that He's caring for them, **and the redemption would come through this recognition. This didn't happen completely during יציאת מצרים, and therefore it required the events of קריעת ים סוף – and that is when they attained the proper level of *emunah* and *bitachon***. They refined and cultivated their internal *emunah* with perfection, and only then did they merit ים סוף קריעת, which brought the reign of the Egyptians to an end.

The Miracle Inside Our Hearts

This is the ironclad principle: As long a person hasn't refined and perfected his *emunah*, the surrounding problems and dilemmas may fade away, but **they will, *chas v'shalom*, reappear in other forms**. If a person hasn't resolved his *bitachon* issues internally, the unpleasant situations will return.

The Sfas Emes explains that at יציאת מצרים, the Jewish People left the oppression, but the oppressors remained intact, while at ים סוף קריעת,

they were smashed and annihilated. What was the difference? At קריעת ים סוף, the *Yidden* merited the miracle through their own hard internal work. To get rid of the *kelipah* altogether, permanently, requires the *avodah* of a *Yid*. **The miracles transpired inside their hearts, and they thus merited to be rid of the tzaros for good.**

Heart Work

Most of us can sadly attest to this phenomenon. How often do we feel that we've rid ourselves of a problem, only to have the problem reappear... or to be saddled with a fresh dilemma not long afterward?

The reason is that—while Hashem can surely rid us of our problems permanently—the *ratzon Hashem* is for salvation from the oppressive situation to come through our *avodah* of *emunah*, that we become people who are “joyful in every situation into which Hashem places them.” The Ribbono shel Olam wants us to feel as though we're in the hands of a compassionate and loving mother.

And this is why problems tend to reappear, until a person refines and elevates his internal *emunah*. For as long as the *bitachon* hasn't been resolved, **the problem has remained in his heart**. Even if nothing is irking you at the moment, and no one is bothering you at this moment, you will be bent out of shape the moment something comes along. If a person doesn't resolve his emotions, he'll keep on banging head-on into problems and issues, and he will become deeply affected by them.

The Only Solution Is *Emunah*

The reality is that the world is filled with all sorts of difficult and challenging situations, and the only way to ensure that they won't hurt is to **strengthen our belief that the Ribbono shel Olam runs the world and that He is good and does good**—knowing that *everything* is for a person's good! Even when an interpersonal *nisayon* arises in which someone hurt him, he will still proclaim: “It's not him—it's all the Ribbono shel Olam!”

He will have the same attitude when someone doesn't pay back his

loan on time. Some people may become upset and say, “Why is he so unfair? I clearly told him that I need the money back in a few months. He always does this! He’s so irresponsible!” But the *ba’al bitachon* will rightfully acknowledge that **the reason he cannot afford to buy what he wants at this moment is not because the loan isn’t paid up.**

Growing Slowly and Surely

The *ba’al bitachon* works mightily to internalize this. He reiterates it again and again: **It has nothing to do with the other person!** He’s joyful and elated as he proclaims, **“Ribbono shel Olam! Thank You for placing me in this situation,** because it’s surely for my good!

In this way, the *ba’al bitachon* purifies and cleanses his heart, piece by piece, **until he becomes a person who isn’t bothered by outside events.** He then ascends to another level in which—not only isn’t he *bothered*—but **he actually attains feelings of *kirvas Elokim* amid his challenges.** Even when he receives a “rebuke”, he still filled with joy and pleasure. The *pasuk* *חֶסֶד יְסֻבְּבֵנוּ וְהַבֹּטָח בָּה'* gains new meaning in his eyes! He truly feels the words of the *Chovos HaLevavos*: *to feel joy in every situation in which Hashem will place him.* He feels such closeness to Hashem *precisely* during the challenging situations.

“Triggering” Our Feelings of *Kirvas Elokim*

Just as a person’s traumas are awakened by negative events, the same plays out for the *ba’al bitachon* – but in the reverse. He has experienced so many situations in which he relied on Hashem and He came through for him. He already lived through many situations, and they have brought him closer to Hashem and to His love. And so, **when he encounters new challenges, his sense of *kirvas Elokim* is awakened!** He anticipates and is confident that this is a situation that will once again bring him so close to the Ribbono shel Olam, and that everything will be good.

The Ribbono shel Olam wants a *Yid* to develop these feelings and that his *nefesh* should be awakened to feelings of closeness to Hashem *precisely* when life is challenging. When he encounters a problem, he will cry out, **“I remember how much light and illumination the Ribbono shel**

Olam brought me last time when I was in a tight spot!" His challenges will become vehicles to awaken his *bitachon* and *ahavas Hashem*!

Kirvas Elokim = I Can't Do Anything

Perhaps we can say that it was for this reason that Chazal prohibited us from benefiting from a *מעשה שבת*, a *melachah* that was done on Shabbos: because on Shabbos, we must develop and cultivate the feeling of *kirvas Elokim*: **"I can't do anything on my own; everything is only from Hashem."** But if someone went ahead and did a *melachah*, he went against this entire idea of *emunah*. And this is why we must not come near the fruits of such an act—because it is saturated with lack of *emunah*, and it implies the belief that one can do for himself.

The Gemara (*Shabbos* 150b) tells the story of a pious person who *thought* about repairing the fence around his field on Shabbos. He then resolved *never* to repair that breach in the fence—simply because he *thought about* something that is forbidden on Shabbos. This pious man felt he didn't properly feel the sense of *מְדוּשָׁנִי עוֹנֵג*, *being saturated with pleasure*, that a *Yid* must feel on Shabbos. (In the end, a miracle occurred, and a tree sprang up in that precise place, accomplishing the work for him.)

We're taught that Shabbos is *עוֹנֵג הַרוּחוֹת וְעֵדֶן הַנַּפְשׁוֹת*, *pleasure of the spirit and the oasis of the soul*—because Shabbos is a time for feeling the highest sense of reliance and closeness to Hashem. On Shabbos, a *Yid* must attain the pleasure of *אִמּוֹ כְּגִמּוּל עַלִּי נִפְשִׁי*, *like a suckling child at his mother's side*.

When We're in Hashem's Embrace, Nothing Hurts

The *Chovos HaLevavos* is teaching us here that it is worthwhile to cultivate this feeling. When a challenge is presented to you, first of all remember that it has nothing to do with the events around you, and everything to do with your internal *nefesh*—and if you will reiterate and strengthen and bolster your *emunah*, all the pain will go away.

It's not always easy. But we can begin by resolving not to talk back to another person—because it's not him. Maybe even go out of your way to

do something nice for that person, so you will emphasize within yourself this awareness that it's not him.

When a person does this over and over, the light and the illumination will slowly but surely be revealed to him, and he will feel less and less pain, ultimately reaching a place where nothing will get to him. He will be so surrounded by feelings of *kirvas Elokim* that nothing negative will penetrate. He will constantly feel himself in Hashem's embrace.

Halevai that we should attain this, with great *siyata diShmaya*.



אור החיים הקדוש פרשת בהעלותך:

על פי ה' יחנו בני ישראל ועל פי ה' יסעו

A *Yid* Is Never in a State of Waiting

The *Avodah* of Waiting Is Against Our Nature

Wanting What Hashem Wants

Parashas Beha'aloscha prominently features the travails of the Jewish People in the desert, and the way they followed the *Ananei HaKavod*, the Clouds of Glory, that hovered over the *Mishkan*. This was the way they knew when Hashem wanted them to pack up their encampment and move on.

The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh teaches us an incredible *yesod* that we learn from these *pesukim*: **"The Torah teaches us the greatness of Klal Yisrael—they wanted what Hashem wanted** (if we're meant to stay in one place for a long time, we're happy to do so, and if we must uproot ourselves after a short time, we're just as satisfied—because this is what the Ribbono shel Olam wants), **for the word יחנו implies that they wanted to set up camp.**

Furthermore, says the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh, the Torah tells us *ובהאריך הענן על המשכן ימים רבים ושמרו בני ישראל את משמרת ה' ולא יסעו*, and *when the cloud tarried long upon the Mishkan many days, the Bnei Yisrael kept the charge of Hashem and journeyed not*. The words *ושמרו את משמרת ה'* teach us that they didn't journey forth **not because it was more convenient to remain in that place, but only because they were heeding the wishes of Hashem that they not journey further.**

This quality was even more obvious when the *Yidden* were uprooted after only a few days in the same place. **Whether resting or traveling—the Bnei Yisrael did so *only* because they wanted what Hashem wanted.**

Serving Hashem by Waiting

Let us delve into this incredible teaching from the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh. The foundation that he's building upon is the teaching of Chazal, בטל רצונך מפני רצונו, *nullify and submit your will before His will* (Avos 2:4). If the Ribbono shel Olam commanded me thus, then *this is what I want*. Not because I had previously wanted it in any case, but ***only* because I want to get on board the program that the Ribbono shel Olam has designed.**

But the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh builds further upon this *yesod*—and this is connected to **the phenomenon of waiting**. When a person is expected by Hashem to wait for something, it entails a certain level of difficulty. In the course of a person's life, the Ribbono shel Olam will periodically present a person with the challenge of waiting—for **this test of character touches a part of the soul that no other challenge does.**

With Every Measure

Since each person must perfect every facet of his character—as we know from the *pasuk* וָאֶהֱבֵת אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ... בְּכֹל מְאֹדֶךָ, that we must love Hashem *בכל מדה ומדה שהוא מודד לך*, *with every measure that He metes out for you*—it is **imperative that we be presented with the *nisyaon* of waiting during the course of our lives, and that we learn to trust and love Hashem through this challenge.**

Just as a person cannot celebrate the completion of *Shas* without completing every *masechta* in the Talmud, so too, we cannot skip over this important aspect of *ahavas Hashem* if we're to perfect our love for Hashem. A person may complain, "I have already endured so many challenges and *nisyonos*...**why am I being presented with the difficult challenge of waiting for what I need or want?**" The answer is

that this is another *masechta*, another important chapter that must be mastered.

The good news is that when we look back later, when the Ribbono shel Olam has already sent the *yeshuah*, we will see that the entire saga of being made to wait for something (children, *shidduchim*, etc.) wasn't a *tzarah* at all! Although this *nisayon* can be greater than others, we must know that it's not a catastrophe. Nevertheless, it is an *avodah* that must be mastered.

The Pain of Patience

When we analyze it, what is the actual difficulty in waiting? **The challenge comes because we're wired to always seek to act, and we feel pain when there's nothing to do. A person feels the constant need to use all his abilities to improve his life.** *Yidden* have an inner drive to do and act, and it is difficult for us to sit still—but we must channel this quality to the right place. We often see *askanim* who can't remain in one place for a minute... they're constantly being pushed by some force. It is a voice that emanates from deep inside their *neshamah*, shouting, "*Onward! We must accomplish!*"

But the Ribbono shel Olam gives tests us in this regard, and He expects us to wait with patience. Sometimes, **a person waits for a *shidduch* for his child. He waits, and he doesn't know what will happen.** *The cloud tarries above the Mishkan....* Another person must wait to have children, or for his child to have a *cheshek* for learning.

He's been assured that he'll yet see *nachas* from his child... but he's still waiting.... He waits for that "one day." He has davened. He has done *hishtadlus*. He has davened again, and he has performed *segulos*. And he's still waiting. **This period of waiting is very painful, because it is contrary to our nature.** We all have an inner drive to advance to the next stage, and if we're made to wait, we're being asked to act in opposition to our nature.

Against Our Nature

We all know that prior to *Matan Torah*, the Ribbono shel Olam went around to all the nations of the world and offered them the Torah. When they asked what is contained in the Torah, they were told about a mitzvah that goes contrary to their nature. The Kotzker Rebbe explains that the Jewish People, too, were given a mitzvah contrary to their nature: והגבלת את העם סביב לאמר השמרו לכם עלות בהר ונגע בקצהו *and you shall set boundaries for the people roundabout, saying, beware of ascending the mountain or touching its edge.* **For it is the nature of a Yid that when he sees something spiritual, he wants to run toward it—to ascend the mountain—and not remain standing even for a moment!** But the Ribbono shel Olam challenged them to see whether they could submit their *ratzon* to His. Indeed, Klal Yisrael demonstrated restraint, and they were awarded the Torah.

Pining with Patience

The challenge of waiting is similar to this *nisayon* of the boundaries. **Waiting is a form of boundary preventing us from getting what we want at that moment** (a boundary is in *place*, while waiting is in *time*). The *nefesh* of a Yid is calibrated to want to push forward to the goal, and a person waits without knowing when that moment will come. He may need to wait years or maybe decades.

And in our *parashah*, we learn this secret, says the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh: **Our *avodah* is to *desire the wait* because this is precisely the *ratzon Hashem*!** Not because we agree, not because we're happy about it—yet nevertheless we want it and we love it, because this is what Hashem wants! Everything in Klal Yisrael's nature wanted to move forward, and yet, they loved and *wanted* to wait because this was Hashem's command. **They drew *chiyus* from the wait!**

And so, let us explore how we can attain this *madreigah* of patiently waiting for Hashem, and how to navigate the *avodah* of the wait.

How to Perform the *Avodah* of Waiting

Distraction from the Pain of the Wait

Sometimes we will hear a person tell his friend, “Listen, you have three siblings ahead of you. You’re not going to become engaged before a year or two. It’s a shame. Do something with yourself.” To a boy we may suggest that he learn another *masechta*, and to a girl we might recommend that she go back to school and earn a degree. “It’s a shame to simply sit and wait... it’s not good for you. Utilize the time for something positive.”

The depth behind this is that when a person’s mind is idle, he becomes frustrated and depressed. When a person sits in a traffic jam, he tends to become frustrated and he’s prone to yelling at other drivers. If he’s stimulated and occupied by a good *shiur*, he’s generally much calmer. The same thing happens when people wait in a doctor’s office. One person has many phone calls to make, and so he’s calm. He may even allow others to go ahead of him in line, while the next person is irritated and constantly yelling at the receptionists. The first person is stimulated, and he’s utilizing his time to advance himself, while the second person is idle and frustrated.

But the truth is that even **this person is only *distracting himself from the pain of waiting*. He’s not *embracing the wait***, and he’s not deriving *chiyus* from the actual wait. Sometimes we ask a person, “What’s doing? How are you?” And he answers with a deep sigh and much pain, “We’re waiting....” Waiting is painful, and people do many things to distract themselves from the pain of the wait—**they’re not embracing the wait for its own sake**.

Wanting the Wait

In truth, there’s great light in the wait itself. The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh reveals to us that it is a mistake to think that waiting is some accidental fact of life... the absence of action. **Waiting has a tremendous purpose in and of itself!** The *sefarim hakedoshim* teach us that the true

reason the *Yidden* needed to remain in certain places for longer was to elevate the holy נִיצוּצוֹת in those places—and so, there was a great purpose and accomplishment in the wait.

Thus, **how do we attain a level of *wanting the wait*?! By recognizing that there's a great purpose in it!** We should never say that we're waiting because there's nothing else we can do... that's life: sometimes we must wait. We can't always get what we want right away. **No! There's a purpose in the wait itself** that must take place before we can advance to the next stage.

The Joy of the Wait

A little boy asks his father, “When will my birthday be?” or “When will it be Purim?” And his father says, “In three weeks.” A few minutes later, he comes back to his father and asks, “Is it three weeks yet?” And this repeats itself a few times.

“Can we daven to Hashem that it should be three weeks already?” he asks, knowing that Hashem makes miracles. The father doesn't have the words to explain the concept of time to his little boy, **but he wishes to convey to him that we're incapable of skipping even a single second, because every second has a purpose. Every moment has its unique תִּיקוֹן and mission**, until we can arrive at the goal.

Galus Brings Geulah

This is the essence of *geulah*. We say that *galus* brings *geulah*—because every moment in *galus* has its unique תִּיקוֹן, and it is only *after* all these rectifications that we can arrive at the time and place of *geulah*. Indeed, there's a concept of hastening salvation, and there's also a concept of קְּפִיצַת הַדֶּרֶךְ, *shortening the path*. But as long as this didn't happen, we must pursue the natural order and pace. Every day has its *avodah*.

And just as this applies to the universal salvation of Klal Yisrael and the world, so too does this apply to the individual salvation of every person. **The salvation of every person is built out of the individual days of his life. There's no such thing as *waiting*!** We don't wait for a

second! **There's an *avodah* that can only happen right now – an *avodah* that leads directly to *geulah*.**

The Reason for the Wait

People tend to look at this matter superficially. They'll say, "You see?! The *kallah* just turned eighteen! It's not for nothing that the boy waited until he was twenty-three! When he began listening to *shidduchim*, the girl was in eighth grade!" Now, this is true. But **that's not the reason he waited!** He didn't wait because his *kallah* was five years younger than him—but because he had to wait! If he became engaged to a girl the same age, that means they *both* had to wait to rectify certain things before the *shidduch* could happen!

The same applies to every area in which a person waits for salvation—whether for children or *parnassah* or to merit to understand Torah. **If it hasn't happen yet, that means that it couldn't have happened yet!** This person is sad. He davened 1,000 *tefillos*. What more can he do? But Chazal teach us, כל הרוחק את השעה השעה דוחקתו, *one who presses time, time presses him*. We cannot dictate when our salvation will come. **If a *Yid* sees that the *yeshuah* hasn't yet arrived, it means that he must invest in his *avodah* that is unique to this waiting period.**

The Choice of Waiting

When a person sees that his salvation hasn't yet arrived, he must understand that **he's not in a state of waiting. Waiting is a choice.** The Ribbono shel Olam didn't decide that you will wait, and He didn't *force* you to wait. **It is our choice and decision to await something anxiously.**

Today, when we call a bank or other companies, the automated system will often come on and say: **"The queue is longer than usual. You can wait on the line for the next operator, or leave your number and receive a call back when it's your turn."** The choice is yours—but don't be upset when you must wait a long time. You had the option of leaving your number. And while you can't be guaranteed that you'll be called back, you can *always* trust that the Ribbono shel Olam knows your number and He knows exactly where to find you.

While You Wait

And so, it is the choice of every person to say: **I will choose not to wait idly, but to fulfill the very purpose of the wait, understanding that I'm accomplishing tremendous things spiritually.** Indeed, practically, the person utilizes this time for good things—but he understands in his heart and mind that he's not doing so just to pass the time and distract from the wait. Yes, the right thing to do is to immerse yourself in Torah and *tefillah*—but not for the purpose of distraction.

One shouldn't make the mistake of thinking that he's in a calamity called waiting—for the truth is that he's fulfilling a great *avodah* that leads to a the time and place of salvation.

Reaching the Right Level of the Soul

And just as it is with restrictions of time and place that prevent us from advancing to what we want, so too is it in the *nefesh*. **Just as one must wait for the right time and the right place, so too must one wait to reach the right level of the *nefesh***—as we know that עולם, שנה, נפש go together. In fact, the *nekudah* of this entire *avodah* is to reach a certain place in our *nefesh*.

And just as it takes time to reach a certain place in time, and it takes time to reach a certain place in the world, so too does it take time to reach a certain level in the *nefesh*. Now, it can happen that a person is able to reach deeper into his *nefesh* through a shortcut, like קפיצת הדרך. But the normal way is to go steadily, journeying from level to level.

“We're Not Waiting: We're on the Way”

When someone calls you when you're on the road, and he asks you where you are, you don't say “I'm waiting.” Because you're en route to your destination. When you will arrive is another story; there may be traffic and long distances to traverse. But you're on the way... you're heading to your destination. As we embrace the wait for the things that we desire, we must know that we're constantly journeying to the destination. We're never idling and waiting in place.

This is the great light that the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh revealed to us within these *pesukim*. **And we must pay attention to the way we become wiser and maturer through the wait, learning new things through it – and thus understand that this is a great gift that must be accepted as such. This will lead a person to utilize this waiting period with joy and goodwill, just as our forefathers did:** ושמרו את משמרת ה' ולא יסעו, *to maintain the charge of Hashem not to journey.*

