

בעזחשי"ת

# *The Way of Emunah*

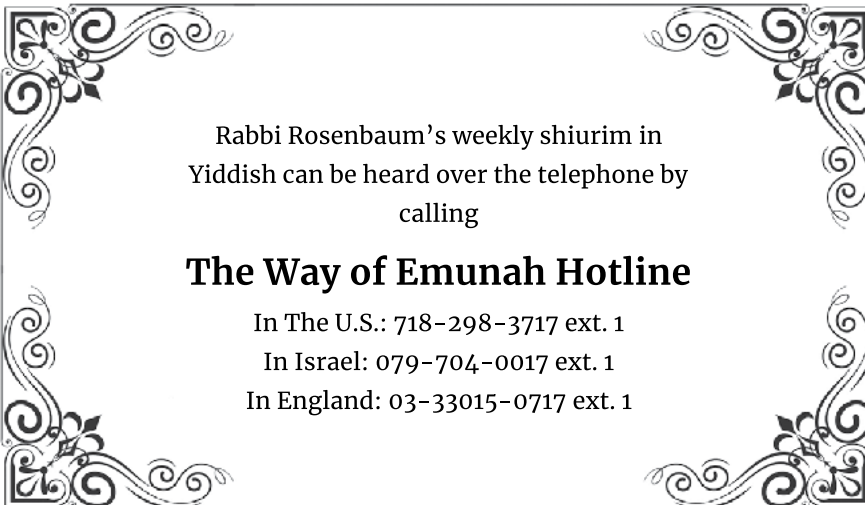
Collected Thoughts  
on the Weekly Parshah

From

**Rabbi Meir Isamar  
Rosenbaum shlita**

**Devarim - Chazon**

יחזי יקר:  
מצאת איתו בבורח"ד?  
אתה ישל לקחת איתו בורח"ד!



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## **Parshas Devarim**



**Rectifying the Sin of the Tongue/One Who Guards His Words Merits Hashem's Kindness/Whenever One Watches His Words, He Gets Closer to Hashem/The Benefits of Guarding One's Mouth/Creating Good Influences with One's Words/Understanding the Language of Animals/Speaking With Clarity of Mind/One Who Speaks Little Will Succeed/Speaking With Silence/Words are Precious/He Lifted the Mountain Over Them for Their Benefit/Parnassah is Not "Because of This Thing"/Parnassah is Decreed by Hashem/Those Who Love Emunah**

### **Bain Hametzarim**

**If We Would Comprehend the Loss of the Churban, We Would Die From the Pain/Auspicious Days to Connect to Hashem/One Can Achieve More on Tisha B'Av Than on Simchas Torah/One Who Mourns the Churban Will See Some of the Joy of Redemption/Remembering the Churban at Every Time of Joy/comforted by the Future Redemption/Making a Siyum to Arouse Brotherly Love/Days of Atonement and Forgiveness**

### **Shabbos Chazon**

**A Shabbos of Hisorerus/A Shabbos of "Vision"/All Tefillos of the Year Ascend on This Shabbos**

### **5 Menachem Av – Yahrzeit of the Arizal Zy" a**

**A Reincarnation of Benayahu ben Yehoyada/Helping a Soul Trapped in a Dog/Annuling the Ruler's Decree**

אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֹשֶׁה אֶל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֶבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן בְּמִדְבַּר בְּעָרְבָה  
(א, א) וגו'

These are the words which Moshe spoke to all Yisroel on the opposite side of the Yarden in the desert, in Aravah... (1:1)

## Rectifying the Sin of the Tongue:

The Chida *zt"l* (Sefer Chomas Anach) writes that word “*Eileh*” can be an acronym for “*avak lashon hara*” – hints of *lashon hara*. The *pasuk* then says that Moshe “spoke to all of Yisroel”. This indicates that he told everyone that they all must be careful to guard their tongues from speaking anything that hints at *lashon hara* in any way. Everyone needed to receive this warning because, as the Gemara says (Bava Basra 165A), everyone transgresses this prohibition.

The *pasuk* also refers to “the words that Moshe spoke”, which is a reference to the Torah. The Chida writes that these two concepts – *shemiras halashon*

and learning Torah, are placed together because they are the fundamental aspects of Yiddishkeit. The *pasuk* says (Yirmiyahu 9:12) that the first Bais Hamikdosh was destroyed because of *bittul Torah*, and the Zohar Hakadosh adds that the second Bais Hamikdosh was also destroyed because of *bittul Torah*, and the long *golus* is meant to rectify the sin of *lashon hara*.

The Chida writes that this is hinted to in the words (Bereishis 27:22): “*Hakol kol Yaakov*.” There are two “*kolos*” that need to be rectified – the *kol* of Torah and the *kol* used to speak *lashon hara*.

He adds that Odom Harishon’s sin did not affect his voice and, therefore, we are still able to

accomplish a lot through speaking words of Torah. Thus, if one speaks *lashon hara* and thereby causes damage to his voice, he is ruining a part of the body that was not blemished by Odom Harishon.

### **One Who Guards His Words Merits Hashem's Kindness:**

The *pasuk* in Tehillim (107:43) states: “*Mi chochom v'yishmoreih.*” (Who is a wise man who will guard “this”.) Sefer Divrei Eliyahu (written by Rav Eliyahu Bleier *zt”l* of Kfar Atta, a close *chasid* of my grandfather, the Kretchnifer Rebbe *zy”a*) quotes Rav Yaakov Shimshon of Shpetivka *zy”a* as explaining that when one guards his mouth and makes sure not to speak even *avak lashon hara*, which is hinted to with the word “*eileh*”, he will merit “*yisbonenu chasdei*

*Hashem*”, to contemplate the kindness of Hashem and bring it into his own life.

### **Whenever One Watches His Words, He Gets Closer to Hashem:**

Sefer Imrei Pinchos (Shaar 7, Inyanim Shonim, Ois 132) quotes Rav Pinchos of Koretz *zy”a* as saying in the name of the Arizal that if one refrains from speaking for 40 days, he will merit receiving *ruach hakodesh*. Rav Pinchos explains that this does not happen all at once, at the end of the 40<sup>th</sup> day. Rather, one ascends to higher levels of *kedusha* every second that he does not speak, and he keeps rising higher and higher until he finally reaches the level of *ruach hakodesh* after 40 days.

This means that one gets closer to Hashem every second that he remains silent. In Rav Pinchos's

words: “The less one *shmuesses*, the closer he gets to *kedusha*.”

## Creating Good Influences with One's Words:

### The Benefits of Guarding One's Mouth:

It is also said in the name of Rav Pinchos of Koretz *zy”a* that when a person wants to say something but refrains from speaking because he suspects it may be forbidden to say what he wanted to say, he has done a great thing that only Hashem knows about, and the prosecuting forces cannot make any claims against this deed.

It is further said in the name of Rav Uri of Strelish *zy”a* that whenever a person refrains from saying something negative or something forbidden, **it is considered as if he fasted for 40 days.** The Belzer Rebbe *zy”a* added, “And I say that it is even more than that. **It is as if he fasted for 120 days.**”

Regarding Moshe Rabenu's *bracha* to Klal Yisroel, the *pasuk* states: “*Vayevarech esechem ka'asher diber lachem.*” (And he blessed them as he spoke to them.) These words can be translated to mean that “he blessed them as their speech was to them”, meaning that **they were blessed in accordance with how much they guarded their speech.** This is in line with the statement of *tzadikim* that the more one guards his words, the more good influences he brings into the world.

It is related that two *chasidim* from the city of Odessa, Russia, once traveled to see the Rashab of Lubavitch *zy”a*. When the first one went in for “*yeichidus*”, the Rebbe asked him, “How are things in Odessa? How are the Yidden there doing?”

The *chasid* answered, “*Boruch Hashem*, the situation is very good. Everyone helps each other.”

The Rebbe was pleased with this answer. He took ten coins out of his wallet and gave it to the *chasid* as payment for making him happy.

When the *chasid* left the room, he told his friend what happened. The second *chasid* knew that his friend was not being completely truthful and he decided that he would tell the Rebbe the truth. When he entered the room, the Rebbe asked him the same question and he answered, “The situation in Odessa is dire. There is much strife between the Jews and most people don’t get along.”

This time, the Rebbe only gave the *chasid* one coin. The second *chasid* built up the courage to ask the Rebbe, “My friend lied

to you and you gave him ten coins. I said the truth and only got one coin. Why?”

The Rebbe answered, “I know exactly what’s going on in Odessa. I know that there are two Odessas. There is ‘Upper Odessa’, where people learn Torah and do *chessed*, and there is ‘Lower Odessa’, where people argue and fight with each other. When I asked you two what was happening in Odessa, I really was asking which of the two Odessas you live in. Your friend told me good things, which meant that he lived in Upper Odessa, whereas you told me bad things, which means that you live in Lower Odessa.”

This story is an example of how one’s words reveal who he truly is and how one receives influences in direct relation to his words.

## Understanding the Language of Animals:

Sefer Tiferes Hayehudi (Ois 16) relates that the Yid Hakadosh of Peshischa zy"u once was walking in a field with his student, Rav Peretz zt"l. As they walked, they saw birds flying around and animals grazing. The birds and animals were chirping and making noise and Rav Peretz told his Rebbe that he desired to know what they were saying. The Yid Hakadosh told him, **"If you are careful with what you say, you will be able to understand what the animals say."**

## Speaking With Clarity of Mind:

When Rav Tzadok Hakohen of Lublin zy"u first started leading his flock (after the *petirah* of Rav Leibele Eiger zy"u) he accepted upon himself to remain

silent and not to say *divrei Torah* in public. One year on the Shabbos of Parshas Beshalach, he opened his mouth and said Torah publicly for the first time. He explained the *pasuk* (Shemos 14:2): "And they returned and they camped in front of Pi Hachirus" by saying that this is a hint that before someone says a word, he must first weigh what he wants to say and contemplate if it is appropriate and worth saying. Thus, the *pasuk* is saying that one should "return and camp", meaning that one should think with a clear mind "*lifnei pi hachirus*", before using his mouth to say anything.

With this explanation, he was hinting that the reason he had been silent was because he wanted to ensure that he didn't say anything inappropriate.

Rav Yosef Alter Hager of Rodovitch zy"u (quoted in Sefer Tiferes Sheb'malchus) uses this



idea to explain the words in the beginning of this week's Parshah: "In the *midbar*, in Aravah, opposite the Suf." The word "*midbar*" can be understood as a reference to "*dibbur*" (speech), while the word "Aravah" can be a reference to a sharp ("*areiv*") word. Thus, the *pasuk* can be read as saying that if one wants to say a sharp word, he should think about the "Suf" ("Sof"), the end of the matter. He should contemplate whether the end result of his words will be positive or negative.

### One Who Speaks Little Will Succeed:

The *pasuk* (Mishlei 10:19) states: "He who holds back his words is wise (*maskil*)." The Vilna Gaon *zy"a* explains the word "*maskil*" to mean "to succeed". Thus, the *pasuk* is

saying that **one who is careful with his words will experience success.**

### Speaking With Silence:

Rav Menachem Mendel of Vorka *zy"a* spoke very little. Even when he met with Gedolei Hador, he usually remained silent. They understood what he meant with his silence and they would "converse silently."

He once met with Rav Elazar of Kozhnitz *zy"a*, and they sat together for a full hour without saying a word. They then said, "**We have spoken for long enough!**" And they went on their ways.

### Words are Precious:

The *pasuk* states that Moshe said (Shemos 6:12): "And I am *aral sefasayim*." Targum

Onkelos translates this to mean: “I am heavy (*yakir*) of speech.” Moshe was saying that every Rav Bunim of Peshischa zy”a word was precious to him, so he explains that the word “*yakir*” spoke very little.

ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ דָּבַר אֵלֵינוּ בְּחֹרֵב וְגו' רַב לָכֶם שְׁכֵת בְּהָר הַזֶּה, פָּנוּ וּסְעוּ לָכֶם  
וְגו', רָאֵה נָתַתִּי לְפָנֶיכֶם אֶת הָאָרֶץ וְגו' (א, ו-ח)

Hashem our G-d spoke to us in Chorev... you have dwelt long enough on this mountain. Turn and journey... see that I have given before you the land... (1:6-8)

## He Lifted the Mountain Over Them for Their Benefit:

The Gemara says (Shabbos 88A) that as the nation stood by the mountain, Hashem lifted it over their heads like a barrel and said, “If you accept the Torah, that is fine and good, but if you do not then you will be buried here.”

The Chida (Sefer Pnei Dovid) says that since Hashem forced us to accept the Torah, He can never send us away. He compares this to the halacha that says that if a man forces himself onto a woman, he must marry her and

can never send her away (Devarim 22:29). He says that the *pasuk* can be read to be saying that “they stood”, meaning that Klal Yisroel will stand for all time, because we were “at the bottom of the mountain”, because the mountain was placed over us and we were forced to accept the Torah. According to this explanation, it was a great favor for us for Hashem to hold the mountain over our heads.

Accordingly, he explains that after Moshe Rabenu hinted to the sins of Klal Yisroel, he told them that Hashem spoke to them “at Chorev”, meaning that He

spoke to them when he lifted the mountain above their heads and said that they had “dwelt enough on this mountain” to be assured

that they would never be sent away, no matter how many sins they commit.

וּבְדָבָר הַזֶּה אֵינְכֶם מֵאֱמִינִים בֵּה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם (א, לב)

And regarding this thing you did not believe in Hashem. (1:32)

## **Parnassah is Not “Because of This Thing”:**

Rav Yehuda Tzvi of Stutchin zy”a (Sefer Degel Machaneh Yehuda) writes that there are people who think their livelihood depends on “this thing.” For example, they think they are supported by their inn or the wine they sell. If they lose the “thing”, meaning they lose what they perceive to be their source of livelihood, they think that there is no hope for them. They don’t believe that Hashem can send them parnassah in another way because their *emunah* is weak. The Torah is referring to such people when it says that they do not believe in Hashem

due to “this thing.” They lack *emunah* by believing that they can only be supported through “this thing” and not by Hashem Himself.

## **Parnassah is Decreed by Hashem:**

A large fire once broke out in the city of Brisk. Afterwards, a businessman came to *bais din* and related that he had a warehouse where he kept his merchandise. During the fire, as the flames reached the street where his warehouse was located, someone came to him and said, “All your goods are about to be burned. I have an

idea for you. Sell it all to me for half its value.”

The businessman refused to sell. When the fire was only three houses away, the same man again offered to buy the merchandise, this time offering 20% of the value. Again, the businessman refused to sell.

When the fire reached the warehouse itself, the man offered to buy it for 10% of its value, but the businessman still refused. Amazingly, the fire then ceased, before burning any of his merchandise. The businessman emotionally said, “I saved so much money because of how smart and clever I am!”

The Rov of the city, Rav Chaim Soloveitchik *zt”l*, was in the next room, and he heard what the man said. He entered the *bais din* room and said, “You think you’re so smart? What you did is actually incredibly unwise.

You’re story shows how dumb you are! Logically, you should have sold, as the fire naturally should have destroyed all your merchandise. Any offer you got, you should have taken.”

He continued, **“The lesson of this story is the opposite of what you’re trying to say. We can learn from it that even if someone is extremely unintelligent, if Hashem doesn’t want him to suffer a loss, he will not lose.”**

### Lovers of Emunah:

The chasid Rav Yoel Brachzin of Teveriah *zt”l*, son-in-law of Rav Noach of Lechovitch *zy”a*, related that after he got married and got to know his father’s *chevrah*, he was amazed to hear how they blessed each other by saying, “Hashem should help you to have *emunah taharah*.”

He wondered: Didn't these people already have *emunah*?

However, he later realized that they possessed lots of *emunah*

but just like one who has a lot of money always wants more, one who loves *emunah* always wants more.

## Bain Hametzarim

### If We Would Comprehend the Loss of the Churban, We Would Die From the Pain:

Sefer M'Zekeinim Esbonen (page 124) relates the following story in the name of Rav Mordechai Chaim of Slonim zy" a:

When Crown Prince Franz Joseph ruled over the Austro-Hungarian Empire, he once visited Jerusalem. When he arrived, all the distinguished leaders of the community came out to greet him with much pomp and honor. Franz Joseph told them that he wanted to visit the Temple Mount, the site where the Bais Hamikdosh once stood,

and the entourage of dignitaries escorted him there. When they reached the site, they told him that they could go no further, as it is forbidden for Jews to set foot on the mountain. They said that he could go up on his own and they would wait for him.

When he returned, Franz Joseph said that he wanted to tell them something. He leaned on his cane for a few minutes before saying, **"Jews. I don't know what to say about you. But I can definitely say one thing, if you knew what you used to have here that you no longer have, you wouldn't be able to stand the pain. You would die from the pain!"**

## Auspicious Days to Connect to Hashem:

The *pasuk* states (Eicha 1:3): “All her pursuers reached her between the borders.” The Bais Avrohom of Slonim *zy”a* (Parshas Masai) quotes the Magid of Kozhnitz *zy”a* as explaining this to mean that anyone who pursues Hashem with a desire to connect with Him can reach Him during the time period of “Bain Hametzarim” (Between the Borders) because this is an auspicious time to draw close to Hashem.

He explains with a *moshol*: If someone wants to meet with the king while he is in his palace, it is not an easy thing to arrange. Very few guests are permitted to enter and most people would be fearful to approach him in any case. When the king is traveling, however, it is much easier to approach him. When he goes out

to be amongst his subjects, it is very possible for anyone to speak to him and make requests.

So too, during the days of Bain Hametzarim, Hashem is “out in the streets”, so to speak. He leaves His place of glory and makes Himself accessible to everyone to get close to Him.

The Bais Avrohom concludes: “The main thing is not to sit with folded hands and allow this time to pass by without gaining from it... At this time, Hashem is close to all those who want to connect with Him. **During these days, one can accomplish as much with a small act of drawing close to Hashem as great *tzadikim* of earlier times accomplished through years of hard work.**”

**One Can Achieve More on Tisha B’Av Than on Simchas Torah:**

Sefer Avodas Yisroel (on Maseches Avos, Perek 3) writes: **“One can be *mesaken* more on Tisha B’Av, when he is downtrodden, than he can be *mesaken* on Simchas Torah.** One can make this rectification with Torah, *tefillah* and *teshuva*. One should not be like the masses who say that they cannot daven during Bain Hametzarim. Of course, they are being foolish. Rather, one must strengthen himself in Torah, *tefillah* and *teshuva*, during these days. They are days of *teshuva* because the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tamuz was the beginning of the 40 days when Moshe Rabenu asked for mercy for Klal Yisroel, as is stated in the Medrash (Devarim Rabbah 3).

### **One Who Mourns the Churban Will See Some of the Joy of Redemption:**

The Kedushas Levi writes that

when Chazal say (Tainis 30B) that anyone who mourns for Yerushalaim will merit (“*zocheh*”) seeing it with joy, the intention is that a person’s strengths stem from his thoughts. If one thinks about something a lot, he will be able to follow up on those thoughts.

If a person thinks about Yerushalaim and mourns its destruction, his thoughts will become purified. (The word “*zoche*” can also mean “*hizdakekus*”, purification.) Once his thoughts are pure, he will immediately be able to experience a bit of the joy of Yerushalaim that will exist in the future.

### **Remembering the Churban at Every Time of Joy:**

In addition to having a set time every year to mourn the

destruction of the Bais Hamikdosh, we also mention it every day in our prayers. Furthermore, at every joyful occasion we make a “*zecher l’churban*” and numerous things that create an excess of joy are forbidden as a means of mourning the *churban* (see Bava Basra 60B and Shulchan Aruch Orech Chaim 560).

Rav Levi Yitzchok of Berditchov zy”a (Sefer Shmua Tova) explains with a parable of king who became angry at his son for his indiscretions and evicted him from the palace, sending him to live in a remote village until he rectified his ways. After many months of living amongst simple peasants, the prince started to become just like them. He ate the same coarse foods they ate and slept on the same type of straw mattress. He forgot that he had once been a pampered prince who ate fine

food and lived royally.

When the king heard how son was living, he was heartbroken. He tried to come up with a way to remind his son of who he really was so that he would desire to improve himself and return to his old life. His idea was to send off one of his servants to the village where the prince was living. He had the servant ride on a beautiful horse, dressed in the fanciest clothes, accompanied by an entourage of ministers with much pomp and ceremony, proclaiming as he rode, “This is how someone the king wishes to honor is treated!”

After seeing this for a few days, the prince realized that if he would make his father proud, he too would receive this honorable treatment. This led him to recall the old days, when he was treated royally, and to yearn to return to his father. He regretted his rebellious actions



and soon made his way to the palace, where he cried and begged his father to take him back, promising to obey him in the future. The king happily accepted his son back into his home with much love.

The way of the world is that when a person experiences a tragedy or loss, the pain subsides over time and is eventually forgotten. Hashem was worried, so to speak, that this would happen to Klal Yisroel in *golus*. Since the exile has stretched on for so long, there was a danger that the Jewish nation would get used to being downtrodden and persecuted, and would forget our glorious past.

Therefore, it was decreed that we should constantly remember the *churban* and do things to keep it in mind at all times. By doing so, we are reminded that we are not defined by our current situation and we always await

the ultimate redemption.

## Comforted by the Future Redemption:

Sefer Siach Sarfei Kodesh relates that Rav Henech of Alexander *zy"ta* once made a Siyum Masechta during the "Nine Days" (between Rosh Chodesh Av and Tisha B'Av). During the *seudah*, he said, "In the old days, during this time of year, the *balhabatim* would be depressed and anguished over the fact that our Bais Hamikdosh was destroyed and we can no longer go there to offer *korbanos*. Today, however, the *chasidim* enjoy festive meals because of their strong *emunah* that the redemption is near. They believe that just like there once was a Bais Hamikdosh, there soon will be a Bais Hamikdosh."

He added, "After Ashmedai (the king of the demons) threw

Shlomo Hamelech out of his palace (see Gittin 68B), Shlomo came to a village and told the people there who he was. When the residents heard who was there, they all surrounded him and they slaughtered an ox and brought all kinds of delicacies in his honor.

“After the ate, the village leader told his family that Shlomo Hamelech was in town and how he had been banished from his throne. He told them, ‘Look at how the tides can turn. Look how much this man is suffering.’

“When Shlomo heard what he said, he recalled how much honor and glory he used to have, and he was full of anguish. He was so upset that he couldn’t eat any of the delicacies the villagers continued to bring to him.

“Shlomo then continued on his wanderings and came to another

city, where he met a pious, poor man. When the man heard that this was Shlomo Hamelech, he was very happy to see him. He comforted him by saying, ‘You once were Shlomo the King and you will again be Shlomo the King. You may have temporarily lost your power but you will get it back one day.’

“These words made Shlomo very happy. The poor man invited him to a small repast in his home, and they ate together. This upright man revived Shlomo’s spirit with a few words more than the wealthy residents of the other village did with all their fine food. Regarding this Shlomo said (Mishlei 17:1): ‘Coarse bread with pleasantness is good.’”

The Rebbe concluded, “That is how we should think during the Bain Hametzarim. We should console ourselves by remembering that just like there

once was a Bais Hamikdosh, there will again be one.”

## **Making a Siyum to Arouse Brotherly Love:**

Sefer Siach Sarfei Kodesh also quotes the Chidushei Harim zy”a as explaining that the reason for the custom of making a *siyum* during the Nine Days is because the Bais Hamikdosh was destroyed because of *sinas chinam* (Yoma 9B) and sharing in a *seudah* for the honor of Torah can rectify this sin by increasing brotherly love. This concept is seen from the Gemara (Shabbos 118B), which relates that Abaya said that when a young scholar completed a

Masechta, he made a festive holiday for the Rabbanan. Creating such unity through Torah is a means to fix the sin of senseless hatred.

## **Days of Atonement and Forgiveness:**

The Maharsha (Chidushei Agados on Bechoros 8B) writes that just like the 21 days from Rosh Hashanah until Hoshana Rabbah are a time to atone for sin, so too **the 21 days between the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tamuz and Tisha B’Av are a time when sins are forgiven because suffering and pain atones for transgressions (Sanhedrin 37B).**

## **Shabbos Chazon**

### **A Shabbos of Hisorerus:**

“Shabbos Chazon” is a time when one can get closer to

Hashem, as Rav Henoch of Alexander zy”a said, **“Shabbos Chazon is the greatest Shabbos of the entire year!”**

We see from the Zohar Hakadosh (Parshas Yisro 88A) that one can receive incredible Divine influences on this Shabbos. The Zohar states that all blessings for the upper and lower realms depend on Shabbos. Everything that occurs during the week stems from the influence of Shabbos. Shabbos Chazon, the Shabbos before Klal Yisroel was sent into *golus*, is comparable to a son who is sent away by his father and forced to leave for a faraway land. Before he leaves, his father hugs and kisses him and departs from him with love and compassion. This show of love connects the father and son and creates a bond that remains no matter where the son goes.

So too, Klal Yisroel was sent away from Hashem's land during this week. This occurred because of the influence of Shabbos, as everything that happens during a

week is a result of the influences of the previous Shabbos. This departure was certainly amidst feelings of love and compassion that connect us to Hashem, and this connection is renewed every year on Shabbos Chazon.

### A Shabbos of "Vision":

The Biala Rebbe zy"va (Sefer Divrei Bina) writes that the reason this Shabbos is called "Shabbos Chazon" is because the word "Chazon" means "a vision", as in "Chazon Layla", a vision one has at night when he is half-asleep.

He explains that when Jews sin, it is because their minds are unclear. They do not do bad things deliberately. Rather, their minds are clouded, as if they are dreaming and unaware of their actions.

This idea is hinted to in the

*pasuk* in the Haftorah (Yeshaya 1:3): “An ox knows its owner and a donkey owner’s trough. Yisroel does not know. My nation does not understand.” This means that an ox knows who his owner is and if it decides to act against him, it is a deliberate act of rebellion. Klal Yisroel, however, “does not know”. When Jews sin, they are in a dreamlike state of unawareness. Immediately after sinning, they awaken and regret it. Therefore, the complaint against them is not that great.

This also is stated in the verse in Tehillim (126:1): “When Hashem returned the captives of Tzion, we were like dreamers.” This *pasuk* is saying that even when Klal Yisroel is in its dreamlike trance, they manage to overcome and mostly do the will of Hashem.

He further explains with a

*moshol* of a close friend of the king who is so appreciative of everything the king does for him that he even thinks about him in his dreams. This is a sign of a true friend. So too, we are so closely connected to Hashem that we think about Him even when we do not have clarity of mind and are not fully awake.

### **All Tefillos of the Year Ascend on This Shabbos:**

The Saraf of Sterlisk zy”a would say that all the *tefillos* that are uttered by all of Klal Yisroel throughout the year **ascend on Shabbos Chazon and reach their rightful place if we daven properly on this Shabbos.**

## 5 Menachem Av 5332 – Yahrzeit of the Arizal, Rav yitzchok ben Rav Slomo Lura Zy" a

### The Neshama of Benayahu ben Yehoyada:

One time, when the Arizal's student, Rav Chaim Vital zy" a, came to see him, the Arizal stood up and said that he was being escorted by the soul of Benayahu ben Yehoyada.

The Arizal explained that Rav Chaim had gone to the *kevarim* of Abaya and Rava. Prior to going he asked him what lofty thoughts he should have in mind there. After he finished davening, he sat at a nearby place reviewed the things the Arizal told him to think about. It happened to be that this place was the burial site of Benayahu ben Yehoyada, who, therefore, clung to him.

### Helping a Soul Trapped in a Dog:

The Shotzer Rebbe zy" a related that the students of the Arizal once prepared a large *seudas mitzvah*. They purchased a large quantity of fish and cooked it for the occasion in a big pot. Since it was a cold winter day, all the doors and windows of the house were closed. Suddenly, they noticed that a black dog had somehow gotten inside and it jumped right into the pot.

The dog was burned and died. Of course, they discarded the fish but they realized something out of the ordinary had occurred and they asked the Arizal to explain.

He told them that there was a priest in town who hated Jews and always sought ways to use it to harm Jewish people. That day, the priest bribed the local fish

seller to put poison in the fish that was sold to the Arizal's students. This caused a commotion in Heaven. One *neshama* that had been reincarnated in a dog for several years suggested that he would give his life to save the Arizal's talmidim by jumping into the pot. His suggestion was accepted and, in this merit, the soul was allowed into Gan Eden.

### **Annuling the Ruler's Decree:**

There was a city located far from the home of the Arizal that was ruled by a wicked and cruel man who caused as much pain to his Jewish residents as he could. One day, the ruler issued a proclamation that the Jews must bring him a massive sum of money within 30 days or he would expel them from their homes. The local Jews had

nowhere near that amount of money and had no idea what to do.

The entire town gathered in the local shul to daven and beg Hashem to have mercy on them and annul the decree. They also sent messengers to other Jewish communities and to the *tzadikei hador*, asking them to daven on their behalf. The messengers traveled far and wide, not stopping to rest, as they tried to get to as many communities as they could, knowing the importance of their mission.

On Friday afternoon, shortly before the onset of Shabbos, the messengers reached the city of Tzefas. Even before finding a place to spend Shabbos, they went to the home of the Arizal – who already was known far and wide as a great *tzadik* and a man who possessed *ruach hakodesh* - to tell him why they came and to ask him to storm the Heavens

to save their brethren.

When they arrived at his house, they found him dressed in finery, wearing his special Shabbos robe. He looked like a glorious angel of Hashem. His students were gathered around him, ready to go out into the fields to welcome the Shabbos Queen, as was their custom. The severe expressions on the strangers' faces told them that an urgent matter had brought them there at such an hour, and, therefore, the Arizal turned to them to hear what they had to say. With tears in their eyes, they recounted their story to him.

The Arizal comforted them by saying that Hashem's salvation can come in the blink of an eye. He said, "You will be my guests for Shabbos. Quickly prepare yourselves and welcome the Shabbos Queen. Do not be worried, as it is forbidden to cry on Shabbos. But know that you

will soon experience Hashem's salvation."

The messengers did as the Arizal said and they stayed in his home over Shabbos. They saw that he was even more lofty and exalted than they had heard and they experienced a very uplifted Shabbos.

After Havdalah, the Arizal turned to his guests and invited them to come with him. He ordered his students to bring strong ropes and join him as well. The Arizal walked in front and everyone else followed him. It was dark and gloomy all around, and only the stars above lit up the sky a little. None of them saw anything around them and could not see where to go. They just followed wherever their leader went, without asking any questions or making a sound. They walked like this for a long time, until suddenly the Ari stopped, and the entire group



stopped after him.

The Arizal pointed to the ground in front of him, and, when they strained their eyes in the darkness of the night, they saw a very deep hole in the ground. The Arizal immediately commanded the students to untie the ropes and lower them into the hole. They hurried and did as he said, and when only the ends were left in their hands, the Arizal commanded them to raise the ropes back up. The people began to pull, and they immediately realized that the task was very difficult. They could tell that something very heavy was caught in the ropes.

They pulled and dragged with all their might until they managed to raise the rope, and behold, before their eyes was revealed a magnificent four-poster bed, adorned with precious royal ornaments. On the bed lay a man sleeping

soundly, his clothes and his entire appearance testifying to his being an important person.

The Arizal approached the bed and shook the sleeping man violently. The man suddenly woke up, and looked with frightened eyes at those around him. The Arizal spoke to him in a firm voice and said, "Are you still stubbornly insisting on expelling the Jews of your city?"

The messengers recognized the man as the ruler of their city, and he admitted that he did intend to do this.

The Arizal handed him a bucket that was missing its bottom, and told him, "I am obliging you to draw the water from the well into this bucket until it is empty. You must do so before the dawn rises."

The governor looked at the bucket and said, "How can I do that? Even if I live a thousand

years, I will not be able to draw even a single drop of water in such a bucket. It has no bottom so no water will go into it!"

However, the Arizal insisted. He told him, "Start drawing water or else your end will be bitter!"

The ruler begged for mercy. He pleaded not to demand something from him that he could not possibly do. The Ari then said to him, "How can you want me to have mercy on you, when you yourself have made decrees on the Jews of your country that they cannot possibly comply with? If you revoke what you decreed on them, everything will be fine. If not, you will die here."

The ruler was seized with fear and trembling. With his teeth chattering, he promised to fulfill the request. The Ari took out a prepared document from his

pocket and read it aloud: "I the ruler of such-and-such place, confirm with this document, signed with my hand, that I have received into my hands the sum that I have imposed on the Jews of my city to deposit in my treasuries. This nullifies every decree I have enacted against them."

The ruler immediately signed the document and returned it to the Ari. The Ari handed it over to the messengers and ordered the man and his bed to be lowered back into the pit.

When the morning dawned, the ruler awoke from his night's sleep, his head heavy and all his limbs aching. He wondered about the strange dream he had but he convinced himself that it must have just been a silly dream, with no basis in reality.

When the day of the deadline to bring the money arrived, the

ruler eagerly awaited the arrival of the representatives of the Jewish community, but they did not come. He immediately sent word to the leaders of the community that if they did not appear before him with the money by sunset, he would expel all the Jews and their property would be confiscated by the government. The emissaries who had returned from Tzefas came and stood before the king, bowed before him in humility, and said: "Our lord, your signature attests that we have paid in full to the royal treasury all that was imposed on us, and the decree is null and void."

They presented him with the receipt, written and signed by him from that fateful night.

The ruler looked at the letter and the men who were there with a bewildered look in his eyes. He recalled the frightening vision he had seen that night,

and he now understood that it was not merely a dream.

Great fear filled his heart. He thought: Who knows what else might happen to him at the hands of the holy leader of the Jews? If he could bring him and his bed to him in the dead of night, what else could he do?

He immediately announced that this was indeed his signature.

He revoked the decreed and, from that day on, he was very careful not to harm the Jews. Not only that, but he issued a proclamation throughout his kingdom that all Jews living in his state would be under his protection and a severe punishment would be inflicted on anyone who harmed them.

**May the memory of the great *tzadik* be a blessing for all of Klal Yisroel.**

The Rambam Writes About Those Who  
Bring Joy to Widdows and Orphans

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Souls Is Comparable to  
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