



Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh Newsletter

Parshat Beshalach 5769

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The Belzer Rebbe's Tisch

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Rav Shiloni and his family joined the Yeshiva last week for Shabbat. After the Friday night seuda, he walked with some boys to the great Belz Synagogue to participate in a Chassidic Tisch.

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Rav Nebenzahl on Parshat Beshalach**HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon****TRUE BITACHON****JUST JOURNEY FORTH INTO THE SEA**

My esteemed teacher HaRav HaGaon R' Chaim Shmuelevitz zt"l used to say in the name of his Rebbe HaRav HaGaon R' Yerucham Levovitz that during the week of *Parshat Beshalach* one should speak about *bitachon* - Trust in Hashem. *Im yirzeh Hashem* that will be tonight's topic of discussion. The Torah describes the Jewish people's flight from Egypt. The Egyptians regretted their decision to send *Am Yisrael* out and began to pursue them. Suddenly the Jews found themselves with a sea in front of them thousands of angry Egyptians behind them. What do they do? "The Children of Israel cried out to Hashem" (*Shmot* 14:10). Hashem responds by telling Moshe: "why do you cry out to Me? Speak to the Children of Israel and let them journey forth" (*ibid.* 15). There is no need to pray, salvation will definitely come, just move onwards towards the sea and everything will be fine. A tremendous level of *bitachon* is required in order to proceed into the water without even praying to Hashem for assistance. Yet this is precisely what Hashem told Moshe to tell the people - rely on Me, do not even pray, just go forwards.

**FOUR MODES OF BITACHON**

The Midrash teaches us that there were four kings who, when faced with the prospect of battle, each requested something else of Hashem - David, Assa, Yehoshafat, and Chizkiyahu. David HaMelech when faced with war said: "I will pursue my enemies and overtake them, and will not return until they are destroyed" (*Tehillim* 18:38). Hashem accepted David's prayer as we read: "and David smote them from twilight until the evening of the next day" (*Shmuel I* 30:17). King Assa stood up and implored Hashem: I do not possess the strength to kill them, rather I will pursue them and You will kill them. Once again, Hashem accepted the king's prayer, and: "Assa and the people with him pursued them to Gerar, and the Ethiopians fell, for lack of vitality, for they were crushed before Hashem and before His camp" (*Divrei HaYamim II* 14:12).

When it was time for Yehoshafat to wage war against the people of Ammon, he said: I do not possess the strength to pursue or to kill, I will simply sing songs of praise to You, and You will wage the war. Hashem accepted this prayer as well: "as soon as they began their exuberant song and praise, Hashem set up ambushers against the Children of Ammon, Moav, and Mount Seir who were attacking Yehuda, and they were struck down" (*Divrei HaYamim II* 20:22). Finally, the Midrash concludes with King Chizkiyahu who said: I do not possess the strength to pursue or to kill or to sing songs of praise, I am going to go to sleep while You wage war. Hashem accepted this prayer as well, as the *pasuk* states: "and it was that very night, an angel of Hashem went out and struck down one hundred and eighty-five thousand people of the Assyrian camp." (*Melachim II* 19:35). Shortly thereafter their king Sanherib was forced to leave *Eretz Yisrael* eventually being killed (*Yalkut Shimoni Shmuel II remez 2, 163*).

"... BECAUSE HE DID NOT SING SONGS OF PRAISE"

Based on what we said at the beginning, that the Jewish people were commanded

to go forth without even praying, it would appear that Chizkiyahu displayed the highest level of *bitachon* - he was so confident that Hashem would fight his war that he took himself off to sleep.

Chazal teach us that because Chizkiyahu was such a great *tzaddik* who influenced the entire population of Yehuda such that they all became *talmidei chachamim*, Hashem wished to make him *moshiach*, however because he did not sing songs of praise to Hashem following his miraculous victory over Sanherib he was not worthy of this (see *Sanhedrin* 94a). How do we reconcile this seeming contradiction - on the one hand Chizkiyahu was on a level that he had no need to sing praise, on the other hand his not doing so is viewed as a great shortcoming?

I believe that there is no contradiction. In order to win the battle there was no need for Chizkiyahu to pray to Hashem or to sing His praises, Hashem would wage the war and Chizkiyahu need not get involved at all. Following the great miracle, however, Chizkiyahu should have thanked Hashem by praising Him for all He had done for himself and the Jewish people. It was his not demonstrating this gratitude that cost him the opportunity to become *moshiach*.

Do we have a right to do as Chizkiyahu and simply sit back and express *bitachon* that Hashem will handle everything without so much as uttering a prayer? Certainly not! One is only permitted to act in such a fashion when prophets or *chachmei Yisrael* tell us that a miracle will definitely occur. When *Am Yisrael* arrived at Yam Suf they were certain that everything was going to turn out for the best. Moshe Rabenu who was sent by Hashem to take the Jewish people out of Egypt had instructed them to proceed onwards towards the sea. Hashem had informed them that they were going to be safe, all they needed to do was to place their trust in Him. Similarly, Yeshayahu HaNavi informed Chizkiyahu that although Sanherib wished to capture Yerushalayim, he had nothing to fear. In the absence of such a prophecy, however, a person may not follow in the footsteps of Chizkiyahu and assume that Hashem will provide a miracle for him. Who says that Hashem wishes to provide a miracle for him?

Apart from Chizkiyahu we find another instance of someone who was told that something would take place and he simply went off to sleep. This of course was Pharaoh who was warned by Moshe that exactly at midnight all of Egypt's firstborn were to be slain, yet Pharaoh decided to go to sleep! In Pharaoh's case, however, it was the opposite of *bitachon* - despite all the plagues he had already suffered, he did not believe that it would actually happen. Chizkiyahu, whose miracle also took place on the first night of Pesach, went to sleep as a show of *bitachon* that Hashem would fight the war as the prophet had promised him.

... WITH YOUR RUNNING SHOES ON YOUR FEET

In last week's *parsha* we read of the mitzvah of Korban Pesach. As we know, the Pesach offering in Egypt differed in many ways to the Korban Pesach that was to be offered throughout the generations. Last week, describing the Pesach offered in Egypt, the Torah commands: "so shall you eat it, your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand" (*Shmot* 12: 11). The people ate their Korban Pesach dressed ready to leave Egypt. This was an expression of *bitachon* that although Pharaoh had not let them leave after the previous nine plagues, this time he would. Here too they prepared for the journey because Hashem commanded them to - they placed their trust in Him that this would indeed be the case.

The Gemara states: "let a person never stand in a dangerous place, and say to

himself that a miracle will be performed for him and save him from harm, for perhaps they will not perform a miracle for him. And even if they do perform a miracle for him, they deduct it from his merits" (*Shabbat* 32a). A person should never be certain that a miracle will be performed for him, and should a miracle be performed it will be at great cost - it will be deducted from his *olam haba*. A person should not say: "You performed a miracle for Avraham Avinu, for the Chashmonaim, and for Esther in Shushan, therefore please perform a miracle for me." It is permitted to pray for a miracle for *Klal Yisrael* but not for an individual. Although there are times when Hashem performs miracles, He prefers to act through natural means.

WHEN SO-CALLED *BITACHON* IS REALLY A *CHILLUL HASHEM*

The prophet Micha describes the wicked people of his time: "Her leaders judge for bribes and her kohanim teach for a fee and her prophets divine for money - yet they rely on Hashem, saying, 'Behold Hashem is in our midst; no evil can befall us'" (Micha 3:11). The Gemara comments: "they are wicked people, but they placed their trust in the One Who said 'let the world exist', therefore G-d brings upon them three punishments corresponding to the three sins in their hands, as the verse states: 'therefore because of You, Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Yerushalayim shall become heaps of ruins and the Temple Mount shall be as the high places of the forest' (Micha 3:12) (*Shabbat* 139a). The first part of the *pasuk* is understandable - they are being rebuked for working for bribes and fees, but why did the prophet include among their transgressions "they rely on Hashem"? Let them at least have credit for having faith in Hashem, even if their lifestyles leave what to be desired. The answer is that proclaiming belief in Hashem in spite of one's evil deeds is a declaration that Hashem does not really care whether one observes mitzvot or is guilty of *aveirot*, and that He will protect them regardless of how they act. Such *bitachon* is not only not genuine, but constitutes a *chillul Hashem*. Did Hashem not say that he will bring good only "if you will follow My decrees" (*Vayikra* 26:3). If we do the opposite, G-d forbid, He will not bring us good. If one goes and leads lives of sin and still expects Hashem to protect him, this is going against G-d's word and is deserving of punishment.

The Sma"g instructed the people of his time, to beware of taking money any money that was not rightfully theirs - even from non-Jews. Although there is a discussion among the authorities whether or not taking money belonging to a non-Jew is permitted, one should not do so because then the nations of the world will charge that Hashem made His covenant with a band of thieves. Hashem wants us to behave in a manner which is a Kiddush Hashem not a *chillul Hashem*. Only when we are impeccably honest can we produce a Kiddush Hashem. This ruling of the Sma"g has great relevance to our discussion, for as we mentioned, Hashem does not wish for us to place ourselves in danger and then say that Hashem will save us - this is not the type of Kiddush Hashem which Hashem wishes of us.

The Rav (HaGaon HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach) zt"l added that one should not take any money in such a situation, even if it is permitted by the strict letter of *halacha*. His reasoning was that it accustoms a person to cheating, and he will eventually act this way against his fellow Jews in a non-permissible manner as well.

We must have the *bitachon* that Hashem is capable of invoking His attribute of mercy and performing great miracles, but we should not act on this belief by placing ourselves in dangerous situations.

TRUE *BITACHON* - DO *TESHUVA* AND PRAY TO HASHEM

There is a well-known dispute between the Rambam and Ramban regarding the obligation of *tefillah*. The Rambam is of the opinion that *tefillah* is a daily Torah obligation while *Rabbanan* determine what should be said and which *brachot* should be recited. The Ramban, on the other hand, is of the opinion that the obligation of *tefillah* is Rabbinic in nature. Perhaps the Ramban agrees that when a person is in danger then there is a Torah-obligation to pray.

The biggest danger facing us today in *Eretz Yisrael* is not the Arab-threat, but the lack of rain. It is incumbent upon us to pray and to show our faith that Hashem is capable of bringing us rain. At the same time, we must strengthen ourselves, do *teshuvah* - Hashem is holding back the rain for a reason. We have no right to act purely on *bitachon* especially given that there is so much we need to improve on. When we improve ourselves then we can hope that Hashem will answer our prayers - this is true *bitachon*.

Staff Dvar Torah

by Rav Chaim Eisenstein, Shana Bet Rebbe

YOU MISSED THE BOAT

The seminal work of Mussar and Machshava, *Mesillas Yesharim* written by HaRav Moshe Chaim Luzatto (Ramchal), is based on the teaching of Rav Pinchas Ben Yair: "Torah leads to watchfulness, and watchfulness leads to alacrity, etc. (see Avoda Zara 20b). The list continues until reaching the highest level of *Avodas Hashem - Kedusha*. There is, however, a striking omission - Torah! In the Gemara which serves as the basis for this ladder of growth the list begins with Torah. The *Mesillas Yesharim*, however, passes over this step and begins with watchfulness - the second level.



HaRav Yitzchak Hutner zt"l explains that Torah is more than simply the first step along the way - it is a necessary prerequisite to attain each and every level. We should not view the list as beginning with Torah and proceeding to watchfulness, etc. Rather, Torah is required before moving on to any further step.

HaRav Hutner was emphasizing two points - firstly, every component of the human spiritual experience must be viewed and judged through the perspective of Torah. Secondly, the level of Torah must be attained before proceeding further no matter what level the person is on.

Using *Chassidic* terms we can say that Torah provides a person with a receptacle in which to retain his growth.

PREPARING FOR SPIRITUAL EVENTS

We can gain some insight into the role of Torah as a preparation for spiritual growth from a well-known teaching by HaRav Chaim Shmuelevitz zt"l. *Parshas B'shalach* describes the unparalleled spiritual heights attained by the Jewish nation at Krias Yam Suf - in the words of Chazal: "The miracles a maidservant saw at Yam Suf were not seen even by the prophet Yechezkel." Nevertheless, only a short time later the Jewish people fell from this high level and committed the *chet haegel* - the

sin of the Golden Calf. How could they have fallen so far from such a lofty level?

Rav Chaim explains that the Jewish people did not actively prepare for the spiritual level they had attained - they did not create the receptacle with which to absorb this sudden growth. Without proper preparation, the effects cannot remain.

Rav Hutner and Rav Shmuelewitz are emphasizing that spiritual growth and spiritual experiences can only last within a specific defined context and they also must be internalized and understood. The steps leading to *kedusha* must be viewed through the perspective of Torah, because the Torah defines what constitutes holiness. In addition, Torah makes a person into a receptacle for internalizing the lessons gained from any spiritual experiences. This lack of active preparation meant that *Klal Yisrael* did not become a receptacle for absorbing and internalizing their growth. Without this receptacle, they were unable to remain on the level they had reached.

I remember as a child, my father (may he live and be well) would often take me to daven and to the Tisch of the Amshinover Rebbe zt"l. As a child, without the benefit of intense Torah learning, many of his practices seemed a bit bizarre. To give just one example, he would use what seemed like gallons of water for *netillas yadayim*. How much water could he possibly need in order to wash his hands? It was only years later when I had a chance to learn the *halachos* of *netillas yadayim* did I discover the opinion of the Rashba that washing one's hands is akin to the Kohanim washing their hands in the Mikdash (see Mishna Brura 4), did I realize the meaning and significance of this *avodah*. Had I learned this prior to having witnessed it, the experience would have had more meaning at the time it occurred. The experience, enhanced by an understanding of *halacha*, transformed a bizarre experience into a truly powerful one. For great people even washing their hands can be elevated to an *avodah*.

Student Dvar Torah Shana Bet

Aliyah, Yerida, v'Aliyah

This week's *parsha* can be divided into four themes:

1. Israel being taken out of Egypt
2. The song of ***Az - Yashir***
3. The falling of the manna and quail
4. The war against Amalek

With Hashem's help we will try to find a unifying point connecting these four themes.

Kedushat Levi (Rav Yitzhak Levi M'Berdichev) cites from Chazal that *Bnei Yisrael's emunah* in Hashem and His servant Moshe at *Kriat Yam Suf* attained them a level of prophecy even greater than that of Yechezkel HaNavi. He concludes from here that within us lays the ability to aspire to greatness (perhaps even reaching the level of Moshe Rabenu). Having reached the level which they did, they were able to sing the prophetic song of *Az Yashir* which provided them with a view from the beginnings of this world all the way until the Next World.

We can then ask the following question: a nation chosen by G-d to be redeemed from slavery, to rise from the depths of impurity to a level of prophecy - what suddenly happened that they lost their *emunah*, complaining to Moshe that they had better remained in Egypt rather than die of famine in the desert? Where was their faith?

Noam Elimelech (Rav Elimelech M'Lizensk) points out that the description of the war with Amalek follows the *psukim* describing *Bnei Yisrael's* lack of water for three difficult days at Massa uMerivah. The Noam Elimelech explains, based on the Gemara in the seventh *perek* of Baba Kamma, Torah is likened to water - the Torah is therefore teaching us that the Jewish people went three days without Torah making them susceptible to an attack by Amalek. When the Jewish people are involved in Torah, even the most evil forces such as Amalek cannot harm them. We must derive from here that we must never come close to three days without Torah, for that would allow the *yetzer hara* and other evil forces to overpower us, G-d forbid.

The Baal Haturim seems to concur with this view. He cites from Chazal that the word Refidim, where the war with Amalek began, can be viewed as a combination of two words: *Raf Yadayim* - weak hands. Israel's mitzvah observance was very weak. The Ba'al HaTurim, known for his extensive use of *gimmatria*, points out that "*Am Yisrael Berifidim*" (the nation of Israel in Refidim) has the same numerical value as "*Rafu Yedeihem Min Hamitzvot*" (their mitzvah observance was weakened). *Piley Pelayim!*

When our observance of Torah and mitzvot weakens, G-d forbid, we allow Amalek to attack us (as a nation and as individuals). When we strengthen our observance and our resolve to keep Torah and mitzvot, then Amalek cannot overpower us.

Rav Yisrael Baal Shem Tov cites the following: at the end of *Parshat Ki Tetze* when the Torah commands us to remember what Amalek did to us (*zachor et asher asa lecha Amalek*), the Torah states "*asher korcha baderech*". There are several interpretations of the word *korcha*, one of them is from the word "*kar*" - cold. Precisely when the Jewish nation reached such a high level of *emunah*, enough to receive the prophecy of *Az Yashir*, precisely when all the nations feared Israel, Amalek attacked and "cooled down" our belief. (It is well-known that the *gimmatria* of the name Amalek is the same as that of the word *safek* - doubt. Amalek planted in us a doubt as to whether Hashem resides among us - the antithesis of *emunah*). The war was therefore waged not only on the battlefield but with Moshe Rabenu's raised hands. As the Mishna in Rosh Hashana teaches us, when Moshe raised his hands heavenward the Jewish people looked upwards and enslaved their hearts to Hashem - this is the way to wage war. In fact the Torah describes Moshe's hands being raised as being "*emunah*" (see Shmot 17:12).

I believe that what we can learn from here is that to maintain a high level of *emunah* requires hard work - we must attain that level on our own. The Jewish people were unable to maintain the level worthy of the clear vision they saw at Yam Suf because this level was given to them as an act of *chesed* by Hashem, it was not something they worked for. A spiritual elevation which is not earned cannot last. Moshe's raised hands stimulated them to pray and attain a higher level on their own.

We can offer another possible explanation for Bnei Yisrael's downfall based on

Rashi (Devarim 25:18) who states that Amalek cut off everyone's *Brit Kodesh* and flung them skywards as an act of defiance towards G-d - they took away the symbol of our covenant and our very connection to Hashem.

The *Brit Kodesh* symbolizes the *Sefirah* of *yesod*, foundation, the highest level of the count which begins with *malchut*. Amalek attacked our *yesod*, and it is up to us to re-attain that level beginning with *malchut* - praying to Hashem and acknowledging Him as our G-d and King.

We now find ourselves in the middle of the weeks of *Shovavim* designated as a time to create a *tikkun* for violations of the *Brit Kodesh*. This is indeed a difficult battle, because we are fighting against the Amalek within us..

Rav Dessler, in his essay on Parshat B'Shalach explains why a nation on such a high level underwent such a test of faith and allowed themselves to be attacked by Amalek. The most difficult tests of faith arrive specifically when Hashem brings us to such a high spiritual level - it is then that Am Yisrael is most likely to fall, G-d forbid. When we have sunk to our lowest point, it is much easier to regenerate and grow once again.

The *yetzer hara* in Gan Eden is represented by a snake, the lowest of all animals. The snake, being on the ground, tries to bite man's heel. Eventually, we are promised that man will crush the snake's head with that heel. The heel represents the lowest spiritual point - the *yetzer hara* tries his hardest to inflict us at our lowest point, however it is at that lowest point that we can most easily grow - with Hashem's help we will smash the *yetzer hara* with the heel of our foot and rise from there.

The idea of the heel representing man's low point can be shown from several incidents in the Torah. For example, in Parshat Shmot we read about the incident where Hashem meets Moshe at the Burning Bush. Hashem instructed Moshe to remove his shoes, the covering of man's low points represented by his heel. As we mentioned, it is at this low point that the *yetzer hara* tries to attack, but that point is most suitable for growth.

In Parshat Vayera, Avraham asked his three guests to wash their feet prior to resting under the tree where he was going to serve them. Avraham insisted that they immerse in the *mikveh* because not knowing who they were, he had to make sure that they were purified of their lowest impurities before resting under the tree - Torah is the Tree of Life (*etz chaim hee lamachazikim ba*).

Rav Dessler zt"l is teaching us that it is not miracles, prophecies, or great revelations that brings the Jewish people closer to Hashem, but it is their raising of themselves from the bottom - working on their *emunah*. Faith that comes from hard work will, with Hashem's help, remain with us until the arrival of the *Moshiach*.

Netivot Shalom adds that we are not alone in this endeavor - Hashem is there to assist us in our quest for spiritual growth. Hashem told Yaakov Avinu in Parshat Vayishlach that He will be there with him during the descent to Egypt and upon the return, even should we sin. We must realize that Hashem is always in our midst and that we have the ability to attain high levels of *kedusha*, regardless of the level we are currently on.

Just as the Jewish nation merited redemption from the exile of Egypt, the root of all exiles, may we merit the ultimate Redemption, speedily in our day. Amen

**Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List
Announcements
Yeshiva**

from

the

Mazal Tov

The Yeshiva would like to wish a Mazal Tov to:

- Ari (5757) and Erynne Rennert on the birth of a baby boy, and to the grandparents Inge and Ira Rennert.
- Kevin Goldschmidt (5764-65) on his marriage to Lauren Gluck.
- Jonathan (5755) and Henchy Kushner on the birth of a baby boy.
- Joseph Hametz (5763-64) on his marriage to Sara Robbins.
- David (5758-59) and Mindy Warshawsky on the birth of a baby girl.
- Gideon Lemberger (5760-61) on his engagement to Dassi Kimmel.
- Jack (5764-65) and Michaela Lyons on the birth of a baby girl.
- Rav Natan and Danielle Schwartz on the birth of a baby boy.
- Rav Kenny and Sara Hirschhorn on the birth of grandson to their daughter Tali and Matanya Pe'er.



Visitors

The following people have visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Michael Gluckstadt (5765)

Baruch Dayan Emet

The Yeshiva wishes condolences to:

- Steven Jaspan (5758), Joseph Jaspan (5762), Joseph V. Harary (5765), and Joseph E. Harary (5769) on the loss of their grandfather, Joseph Harary.

Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- Toiby Yehudit bat Tama Gaisa
- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanvel ben Breindel
- Sima Rivkah bat Eidel
- Leah bat Eidel
- Chaim Shmuel Moshe ben Golda
- Aryeh Rephael ben Sarah
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Yitzchak ben Tova
- Fraida Rachel bat Sarah Milcha
- Lea bat Bracha
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Perla bat Miriam
- Rachel bat Sarah
- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira

- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther
- Nachum Tzvi ben Ratza
- Lottie Adina bat Claudia
- Orly Bat Yaerah

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, let our office know so we can keep everybody updated. Are you visiting Israel? - let us know! We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

Shabbat Shalom,

HaRav Aharon Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

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