

Torah Wellsprings

*Collected thoughts
from
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Naso



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Torah Wellsprings - Naso

Hashgachah Pratis

Rashi (6:2) writes, "Why is the parashah of *nazir* written after the parashah of *sotah*? To tell you that whoever sees a *Sotah* who had sinned, should *זייר עצמו מן היין*, distance himself from wine, because wine leads to adultery." He will choose to be a nazir, because he sees the problems that can come from drinking wine.

The Bikurei Aviv (from the Rebbe of Radzamin zt'l) explains this Rashi with a lesson from the Baal Shem Tov's zt'l. The Baal Shem Tov teaches that when a person sees an aveirah, it means that he is associated with this aveirah, in some way. For example, if he sees someone becoming angry, he also has the bad trait of anger. If he sees someone desecrating the Shabbos, it means he also desecrates the Shabbos, in some way.

The concept is based on the belief that everything is bashert. If someone sees an aveirah, it didn't happen by chance. It was decreed in heaven that he should see the aveirah, so he can do teshuvah and rectify his ways. If he wouldn't have any association to this aveirah, he wouldn't see it by others.

The Bikurei Aviv says that this is Rashi's intention when he writes, *שכל הרואה סוטה*, *שכל הרואה סוטה*, "Whoever sees the sotah who had sinned he will distance himself from wine." Since he saw someone who committed an aveirah, it means he is also associated with this aveirah. His teshuvah is

to become a nazir, who is forbidden to drink wine.

Hashem would speak with Moshe in Ohel Moed, as it states at the end of the parashah (7:89) *וַיִּשְׁמַע אֶת הַקּוֹל מִדְּבַר אֱלֹהִים מֵעַל הַכַּפֹּת אֲשֶׁר עַל אֶרֶץ הָעֵדוּת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִים וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים*, "When Moshe arrived at Ohel Moed to speak with [Hashem], he heard the Voice speaking to him from atop the cover (כפרת) that was upon the *הָעֵדוּת*, from between the two *הַכְּרֻבִים*, and [Hashem] spoke to him."

Rashi writes: *כמו מתדבר. כבודו של מעלה. מדבר, כן, מדבר בינו לבין עצמו ומשה שומע מאליו*.

Rashi is saying that it was like Hashem was speaking to Himself, and Moshe overheard.¹ This expression is more respectful, rather than to say that Hashem spoke directly with Moshe.

Reb Moshe Feinstein zt'l (Darash Moshe) explains that we also "overhear" what Hashem decrees and says. Only, that we don't "hear" the bas kol *when* Hashem makes the decree, but after it transpires, we know that this was Hashem's decree.²

For example, a bas kol announces that a person should go to a specific place. The person didn't hear the bas kol and isn't aware that he must go to that place, but after he gets there, he understands that this was Hashem's will. This is hinted to in this Rashi, *מדבר בינו לבין עצמו*; it is like Hashem was speaking with Himself. We aren't on the level to receive a direct message from

1. The meforshim explain that the word *מדבר*, with a *חירק* under the mem, is distinctly different from *מדבר*, with a *שווא* under the mem. The *חירק* would be used in the word *מתדבר*, which is when one speaks to himself. So, when the Torah writes, *מדבר אֱלֹהִים*, that Hashem spoke with Moshe, there is a hint that Hashem was *מתדבר*, speaking to Himself, *keviyahol*, and Moshe overheard.

2. A grandson of Rebbe Reb Zusha of Anipoli zt'l said, "Before my grandfather entered a city to collect money, he knew with ruach hakodesh how much money he would raise in that city. I am not on that level, and I don't know beforehand how much I will collect. However, when I leave the city, I know the amount that was decreed from heaven that I should receive in this city."

Hashem. When Hashem issues a decree, it can be considered like He was speaking to Himself, because no one heard it. But after we do something, or go somewhere, etc., we understand that this was Hashem's will. It is like we listen in to Hashem's conversation because now we know that this was decreed.

We quote Reb Moshe's inspirational words: "I think that hinted in this Rashi is the way things are in regard to everything that occurs in the world. Hashem decrees all that occurs. As Chazal say, 'A person doesn't knock his finger below unless it was decreed from Above.' But the decree is like Hashem speaking with Himself. We don't hear it until it happens. This is how I explained (Mishlei 3:6) בכל דרכיך דעהו, 'In all your ways, know Him.' A person who fears Hashem knows that every situation that happens to him is Hashem's will. It is like our family. We left our homeland [in Russia] to go to America. We did Hashem's mitzvah, like Avraham Avinu, who did Hashem's will when He told him (Bereishis 12:1) לך לך מארצך, 'Go from your land.' The difference is that

Avraham knew of the command, and he went l'shem shamayim, and we didn't know. We were traveling like we were doing our own will, but the traveling was essentially the performance of Hashem's command.

Therefore, a talmid chacham who has yiras Shamayim intends with everything he does that he is performing Hashem's will, and not his own will."³

The Midrash says, "What does Hakadosh Baruch Hu do from the time He created the world until today?" The Midrash replies, "He makes shidduchim." The simple meaning is that Hashem arranges shidduchim, who will marry whom. But there is another explanation, taught by Reb Shmuel Wosner zt'l:

He explains that "shidduchim" refers to people meeting one another and helping one another. This is also a form of a shidduch. For example, someone meets an old friend, whom he hasn't seen for a long time, and his friend offers him a loan, which he needs desperately. How did he meet the right

3. There is a fundamental difference between when a school puts on a performance for entertainment and when professionals perform for profit. When a businessman wants to put together a professional play, he will hire the number of actors that he needs. He starts with a playscript, and if the playscript requires fifteen actors, he will hire fifteen actors.

However, when a teacher wants to create a play for his class, and he has twenty-seven students in his class, the teacher will make sure that all twenty-seven children have a role. Perhaps the playscript only contains fifteen acts, but the teacher will modify the scenes and plots so that every student will have his time on stage.

In other words, for the teacher, the play is adjusted to fit the number of actors, and for the professional, the actors are there to fill the requirements of the script.

This is a mashal to help us understand a Yid's mission in the world. It is known that each Yid has his personal mission to fulfill. But we shouldn't think that Heaven says, since this person was born and came into the world, we have to find a role for him to fill. It is the opposite. There was a role to complete, which is why he came into the world. It can be compared to the professional who hires workers for his play. He only hires according to his needs. Similarly, each person has a role to complete, and that is the reason he came to the world.

This concept answers the following question: In parashas Bamidbar, the Jewish nation is counted, and each shevet had a round number of people. For example, for Reuvan, the count was 46,500 people. For Shimon: 59,300. For Gad, 45,650, and so on. How did the number end up being so round and exact? We can explain that this teaches us that it isn't that people are born, and then a mission is found and given to them. It is the opposite. There is a mission, and therefore, they were born. With this in mind, we can easily understand that if Hashem planned a round number to be born, that will occur. There is no reason for more people to come to the world when there is no role for them to fill.

person at the right time? This was arranged by Hashem.

There's another person who travels to a chasunah, and he meets someone there, and they decide to learn together, b'chavrusah. They didn't go to the wedding with a plan of meeting one another. But Hashem had them meet so that this chavrusah will transpire. These are the "shidduchim" Hashem makes in the world.

A person has a neighbor. One day, they meet, begin talking, and they come up with an idea for a shidduch, and the shidduch transpires. The shidduch that occurred is certainly from the "shidduchim" Hashem makes in the world, but that they met each other and came up with the idea together is also considered a "shidduch", a planned meeting from Heaven to bring good results.

There's another person who meets a friend in the doctor's waiting room. Speaking together, one of them hears about a job opportunity, which works out, and he has parnassah. This encounter was also a "shidduch" arranged in heaven.

There are thousands of other examples of "shidduchim". They occur every day, and Hashem makes these "shidduchim" from the day the world was created until today.⁴

At matan Torah, Hashem said (Shemos 20:2) אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, "I am Hashem, your G-d..." In English, the word "you" or "your" refers at times to one person, and at other times, it refers to many people, and the intention can

be determined based on the context. Accordingly, one would assume that when Hashem said, "I am Hashem, your G-d...", He was referring to all Yisrael.

However, in lashon hakodesh, the expression אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, "I am Hashem, your G-d..." is when speaking to one person. If Hashem was speaking to many people, it would state אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. Why is it written in singular form?

The Shach (al HaTorah) replies: כֹּל אֶחָד כְּפִי קָבַלְתוּ וּכְפִי כָחוּ, לִזֶה אָמַר בְּלִשׁוֹן יְחִיד, "Each person according to what he accepted and according to his strength. Therefore it is written in singular tense."

This means kabbalas haTorah is very individual. True, the 613 mitzvos are the same for everyone, but there is still plenty of room for individuality, and for a personal connection to Hashem and to Torah. The Aseres HaDibros were said to each individual - as implied with אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, "I am Hashem, your G-d" - because each person has his personal connection to Torah and to Hashem.

The Days After Shavuos

When the Beis HaMikdash stood, there was a mitzvah to come to the Beis HaMikdash on the three רגלים, on Pesach, Shavuos, and Succos. When one comes, he must bring a קרבן ראייה, a korban for "seeing" (*keviyachol*) Hakadosh Baruch Hu in the Beis HaMikdash. The halachah is that if one didn't bring the korban on the first day of Pesach, he could

4. I heard from a real estate broker that for several months he didn't make any sales. One day, he was at a bar mitzvah of the son of a friend, and in the middle of the bar mitzvah, the baal simchah came over to him and said, "The person who just walked in is very respected and wealthy. Please welcome him and sit together at the simchah. Keep him company. I am busy with the guests, so I am asking you to help me make this person feel welcome at the simchah."

He did so, and they began speaking. He told the wealthy person that he is a real estate broker and that he had a property available for sale. The rich man was interested, and within a few days the sale was finalized. The wealthy man then introduced the broker to another person who owned many properties to sell, and was looking for a good broker to sell them for him. He met with that person and signed a listing agreement to sell his properties. He made several sales, and he earned a nice parnassah. This is an example of the shidduchim Hashem arranges to sustain His creations.

bring it on all the other days of Pesach. The same is with Succos. If he didn't bring the korban on the first day of Succos, he can bring it on all other days of Succos, and he can even bring the korban on Shemini Atzeres. The same applies to Shavuos. If he didn't bring the korban on Shavuos, he has another six days to bring the korban.

This is somewhat surprising since the days that follow Shavuos are weekdays.

Although we don't bring korbanos in our times, this is an indication that the days following Shavuos are special days, and we can complete and make up on these days what we didn't succeed in receiving on Shavuos.

Some people feel disappointed that they didn't take sufficient advantage of the holy yom tov Shavuos. Therefore, we come to encourage them, to tell them that it *is still Shavuos*, in a way. These are days that the korban of Shavuos can be made up, and you, too, if you missed something on Shavuos, you could make it up on these days. Bringing korbanos after the first day of yom tov is called תשלומין, paying up. It is amending the past. In this manner, we can correct during these days what we missed on Shavuos. We receive the Torah on these days, as well.

Tosfos (Chagigah 9, ד"ה תשלומין) writes that since the days following Shavuos are weekdays, the korban ראיה that is brought on those days is certainly תשלומין דראשון, completing the obligation of the first day. This is unlike Pesach and Succos, where there is an opinion that the korban ראיה is תשלומין זה לזה, which means that it isn't making up for the korban that wasn't brought on the first day; rather, the korban is a new obligation.

We repeat this so we can understand the specialness of the days following Shavuos. We bring the korban ראיה of Shavuos then, which tells us that, in a way, these days are still associated with Shavuos, and whatever we lacked on Shavuos, we can still attain.

Chok Yaakov (Shulchan Aruch, 473:1) says that if a person didn't say Shehechyanu on Shavuos, he can say it on the days following Shavuos. The Maharil Diskin zt'l quotes this lesson from the Chok Yaakov and debates whether we can rely on it. Nevertheless, even according to the Maharil Diskin, the mitzvah to meet one's rebbe on yom tov (see Rosh Hashanah 16b) can be accomplished on the days following Shavuos.

So, we see that all opinions agree that there is an aspect of Shavuos during these days.

The Rebbe of Tchartkov zt'l and other tzaddikim said that שבת נאך שבועות איז נאך שבועות, "Shabbos after Shavuos is still Shavuos." (The Yiddish word נאך has two translations: It can mean "after" and it can be translated as "still".) So שבת נאך שבועות איז נאך שבועות means, "Shabbos *after* Shavuos is *still* Shavuos."

The Chidushei HaRim zt'l writes, "There is a very long Midrash for parashas Naso, and there is also a long Zohar. I think this is because this Shabbos follows Shavuos, when Hashem gave us the Torah. There is a bounty of Torah on these days, the gates are still opened, and whoever wants can come and take."

Rebbe Leibele Eigar (Shabbos after Shavuos, תרל"א) explains the reason parashas Naso is read on Shavuos (in most years). Some people feel after Shavuos that they are distant from Torah, and that they didn't elevate themselves on Shavuos as they wish they had. We therefore immediately read parashas Naso, where it states there (at the beginning of the parashah 4:22) נָשָׂא אֶת רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן גַּם הֵם לְבֵית אֲבוֹתָם לְמִשְׁפַּחָתָם, "Raise the heads of the sons of Gershon, as well, according to their families' household, according to their families." The pasuk can be translated as follows: בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן, the people who feel that they were banished from kedushah, as it states (Shmuel 1, 26:19) כִּי גֵרְשׁוֹנֵי הַיּוֹם מְהַקְטִיפָה בְּנַחֲלַת ה' "for they have banished me away this day from attaching myself to the heritage of Hashem," they shall know that they, too, can come to kedushah. נָשָׂא אֶת רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי גֵרְשׁוֹן, Elevate the heads of those people

who feel broken and distant from Torah, because גם הם לְבֵית אֲבֹתָם, they too can become elevated and attached to Torah.

Beis Avraham (Naso, ד"ה אבי) writes, "It is written in sefarim (see Be'er Mayim Chaim, Bishalach, 29) that when the sea split, Dasan v'Aviram weren't there... [They had returned to Mitzrayim]. When they heard that the Yam Suf split before the Jewish nation, they returned to the Yam Suf and the sea split just for them. The same occurs regarding the holy yom tov for receiving the Torah. Even those who were late and didn't yet receive the Torah, Hashem gives them another opportunity on this Shabbos (Shabbos parashas Naso), to receive the Torah."

A way to keep ourselves attached to the yom tov is to make a kabbalah tovah, which we will keep, always, without fail. This will be our eternal connection with the yom tov.

Birchas Kohanim

This week's parashah discusses the mitzvah of birchas kohanim (6:23-26), that the kohanim should bless the Jewish nation with three brachos: יִבְרַכְךָ... יְאֹר... יֵשֵׂא ה'. In Eretz Yisrael, the kohanim say these brachos every day. In chutz l'aretz, Ashkenazic communities say these brachos solely on yom tov. Much good comes to Klal Yisrael from these holy brachos.

But what is the purpose of this mitzvah? If the purpose is so the Jewish nation will receive Hashem's brachos, Hashem can bless them without needing to come onto the kohanim!

The Akeidah (74) explains that the purpose of birchas kohanim is to remind the Jewish nation that all their brachos come from Hashem. And when they know that everything they have is from Hashem, that enables them to receive more brachos, and more good will come to them.

Whereas, when people think that the good they have was earned on their own, this thought withholds from them the ability to receive more brachos from Hashem.

This is the reason each brachah says Hashem's name. The kohanim say, יִבְרַכְךָ ה'... יֵשֵׂא ה' יְאֹר ה'... יֵשֵׂא ה', which means Hashem shall bless us, Hashem shall shine His countenance upon us, and so on. Thereby, the kohanim are telling the Jewish nation, "Realize that all your brachos are from Hashem." When they know this, Hashem will grant them more brachos.

The Akeidah writes that this is also the reason for all the brachos we say (such as brachos over food). The brachos are reminders, and tell us that the good we have comes from Hashem. When we recognize that, we will receive more of Hashem's kindness.

Chazal (Brachos 7.) say, אֵל תְּהִי בְרַכַּת הַדְּיוּט קְלָה, בעיניך, "A simple person's blessings shouldn't be a small matter in your eyes." The Akeidah explains, "We shouldn't consider our brachos trivial because there is great benefit to them. It brings us awareness of Hashem's kingdom, and with this awareness, we will merit to receive bounty from Above."⁵

5. A chasid informed Rebbe Dovid Moshe of Tchortkov zt'l that he was planning to buy a forest from a poritz. The poritz was old, and he wanted to free himself from all his assets. He was selling the forest for half price.

It was a very large forest, so even at the discounted price, it was still a lot of money. The chasid knew that he would have to sell everything he had in order to buy it, and still have to borrow money on top of that. But the chasid spoke with his advisors, and everyone he spoke to enthusiastically recommended that he buy the forest. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity; he would become very wealthy.

The chasid didn't come to Rebbe Dovid Moshe of Tchortkov zt'l for advice on whether to buy the forest or not. He was certain he should buy it. He relied on the experts he spoke to. Rather, he shared his plans

with the rebbe as a conversation piece, or perhaps to get the rebbe's brachos, but he wasn't seeking counsel.

At the end of their conversation, the Chortkover told him, "Regarding the forest, I recommend that you don't buy it."

The chasid was devastated when he heard that. He was certain that he would become very wealthy from this purchase.

He decided not to listen to the rebbe's advice in this regard. He told himself, "If I had come to ask the rebbe for counsel, I would listen to his advice. But I mentioned it as a side-point. I didn't ask him whether I should buy it or not. I am not obligated to take the rebbe's counsel." At least, that is what he thought.

Unfortunately, things did not go as expected. He sold his properties, borrowed money, and bought the forest. He immediately sent his workers to cut down some trees so that he could sell the wood, but the trees were infested with worms.

The entire purchase was worthless. He was embarrassed to return to the Tchorokover Rebbe because the Rebbe had warned him not to buy the forest, and he went against his advice. But two years later, he told himself, "It is enough that I lost my money. Should I lose my Rebbe too?" So he went to Rebbe Dovid Moshe of Tchorokov and said, "I know. It is my fault. The Rebbe knew better than me. I should have relied on the Rebbe's ruach hakodesh."

The Tchorokover zt'l replied, "It wasn't ruach hakodesh. It is just that when you spoke to me about the forest, I heard from your words that you were certain that you would make money on this venture. You didn't mention Hashem's name. It seemed to me that you thought you could succeed on your own, without Hashem, and therefore, I told you not to get into this business. One can't succeed without Hashem, and when one knows this truth, he is more likely to succeed. But you thought you don't need Hashem's help, and therefore, I advised you against it."

Without Hashem's help, one can't succeed. Success comes only from Hashem. One must always remember this."

The Chozeh of Lublin zt'l explained the pasuk (Shmuel 1, 2:7) ה' מוריש ומעשיר, "Hashem impoverishes, and makes wealthy," that it can happen in a moment. In one moment, one can become wealthy, and in one moment, one can lose everything.

A wealthy chasid heard this vort from the Chozeh but didn't believe that one could become poor or rich so quickly. On his way home, this chasid passed the home of a priest he knew, and a kelipah (impure spirit) took hold of him, and he went inside and told the priest that he wanted to convert, r'l. The priest knew this Yid for a long time, and he knew that he was a pious Yid. So, he didn't believe that the chasid was sincere. "You are playing a prank on me. You will turn me into a fool. I refuse to convert you." But the Yid insisted that he sincerely wanted to convert.

The priest told him, "I will agree to your request only if you sign a document that says that if you back out of the conversion, you will give me all of your possessions."

The Yid signed the document and handed it to the priest.

Immediately afterward, he regretted his foolishness. He couldn't understand how he had done something so ridiculous. Of course, he believed in Hashem and in the Torah. He didn't want to convert!

He quickly left the priest's home, although he knew he would forfeit his wealth. He ran to the Chozeh and told him what occurred. He added, "It happened to me because I didn't believe the rebbe when you said that one can become poor in a moment."

The Chozeh replied, "Now go home, and you will discover that one can become wealthy in a moment, too."

When he got home, the chasid heard that a fire had broken out in the priest's home, and the document he wrote was consumed in flames. The priest's family had no proof that there was a document. He had become wealthy in a moment!

Birchas HaTorah

Shulchan Aruch (47:1) states, ברכת התורה צריך, לזהר בה מאד, "You must be extremely cautious with *birchas haTorah*."

The Mishnah Berurah elaborates:

"Don't learn Torah before you say *birchas haTorah*, and say the brachah with joy. Chazal say that the galus came because people weren't saying *birchas haTorah*. Therefore, we must be very cautious with this mitzvah, to praise Hashem that He chose us and gave us His desired Torah. Chazal say that one doesn't merit having children talmidei chachamim if he isn't cautious with *birchas haTorah*."

The halachah is that *birchas haTorah* is a mitzvah from the Torah, so we should be extra cautious with this brachah.

It states (*Yirmiyahu* 9:11) מי האיש החכם ויבין את זאת, ואשר דבר ה' אליו ויגידה, על מה אבדה הארץ נצתה כמדבר בלי עובר, "Who is the man so wise that can understand this? And who is he to whom the word of Hashem has spoken, that he may declare it? Why is the land ruined and withered like a wilderness, without anyone passing through?"

ויאמר ה' על עזבם את תורת, "And Hashem said, 'It is because they have forsaken My Torah...' Chazal say that this means they didn't make a brachah over Torah. This caused the destruction of the land and the galus. They didn't recognize the gratitude that they should have to be able to study Torah.

The Gemara (*Brachos* 35) discusses a contradiction in the pasukim, whether the world belongs to Hashem or to man. It states (*Tehillim* 24:1) לה' הארץ ומלואה, which means that the world, and everything in it, belongs to Hashem. And it also says (*Tehillim* 115:16) והארץ נתן לבני אדם, which means Hashem gave the

earth to man. So which one is it? Does the world belong to man or Hashem? The Gemara replies that before reciting a brachah, the land belongs to Hashem. After the brachah, Hashem endows the land to man.

A similar contradiction is found regarding the ownership of the Torah (as discussed in *Avodah Zarah* 19.). It states (*Tehillim* 1:2) כי אם בתורת ה' הפצו, "His desire is in Hashem's Torah." This implies that the Torah belongs to Hashem. But the end of this same pasuk states, ובתורתו יהגה יומם ולילה, "and in his Torah, he toils day and night." The end of the pasuk implies that it is the person's Torah. So, the pasuk begins by telling us that it is Hashem's Torah and ends by saying it is man's Torah.

The Noda b'Yehuda (*Tzlach*, *Brachos* 64) answers that the exchange occurs when we say *birchas haTorah*. Before the brachah, it is Hashem's Torah. After the brachah, Hashem gives it to us.

The Noda b'Yehudah (*Tzlach*) writes, "In my opinion, *birchas haTorah* is a wonderful *segulah* for remembering Torah, "because when one says *birchas haTorah*, Hashem gives him the Torah as a gift."

He explains that Mishnayos used to be studied by heart, until Reb Yehudah HaNasi wrote down the Mishnayos so that the Torah shouldn't be forgotten. He therefore named the first *masechta* "Brachos" to remind people to say *birchas HaTorah* before they begin to study, as this is a *segulah* to remembering Torah.

The *Tzlach* writes, "If it weren't for this reason, he would have called the *masechta* 'Kriyas Shema,' because Shema is a mitzvah from the Torah and is the opening topic of the *masechta*."⁶

6. The *Tzlach* writes that this is also why the ב"ג (*Baal Halachos Gedolos*) wrote out the entire *birchas haTorah* at the beginning of his sefer. He wanted to remind people to say *birchas haTorah*, so that the students would remember the halachos he writes in his sefer.

The Holiness of a Nazir

One of the primary halachos of a nazir is that he is forbidden to drink wine. Standard nazirus is for thirty days. How hard is it to refrain from wine for thirty days? And yet, it causes holiness, as it states (6:8) כל ימי נזרו קדוש הוא לה, "For the entire duration of his abstinence, he is holy to Hashem."

The Lev Simchah (5743, ד"ה איש) writes, "This parashah teaches us a profound lesson, and it is a great wonder. A person accepts upon himself not to drink wine – kosher wine – for a short period of thirty days, and he already reaches the level of כי נזר אלקיו על ראשו קדוש הוא לה, 'The crown of Hashem is on his head... he is holy to Hashem.' From this we learn the power of a kabbalah tovah. He accepts upon himself a small amount, and from heaven, he will receive much more and divine aid. Hashem's crown is on his head."⁷

The Torah writes (6:2) איש כי יפליא, and the Ibn Ezra writes, "יפליא means doing something amazing (דבר פלא) because most people follow their temptations and this person distanced himself from his temptation for wine. He did this for avodas Hashem because wine ruins the mind and ruins avodas Hashem."⁸

Another primary halachah of a nazir is that he may not become tamei to a human corpse. This halachah is another indication of the immense kedushah a nazir attains

through his prishus. The Alshich HaKadosh writes, "In addition to the bounty of kedushah that is poured onto him when he is poresh (refrains from drinking wine), he acquires another kedushah – the kedushah of kohanim. Therefore, he may not become tamei to the dead. Furthermore, he receives the kedushah of a kohen gadol, who may not become tamei even to his closest relatives. He attains the level of a kohen gadol because of his prishus and chassidus.

"These ideas are hinted at in the pesukim: כל ימי הזירו לה, since he became a nazir for Hashem, it is proper that he be like a kohen hedyot. Therefore, על נפש מת לא יבא, he shouldn't become tamei to the dead. However, I will do even more for him, לאביו לא יטמא; וכר' לא יטמא; he can't even become tamei to family. This means he is on the level of a kohen gadol. The reason is כי נזר אלקיו על ראשו, Hashem's crown is on his head, similar to a kohen gadol."

The Alshich adds, "The nazir is even greater than a kohen gadol because a kohen gadol's crown is the holy oil, and for the nazir, his crown is Hashem himself." As the pasuk writes regarding the kohen gadol (Vayikra 21:12) נזר שמן משחת אלוקיו עליו, "for a crown – the oil of Hashem's anointment – is upon him." The crown is "the oil of Hashem's anointment." However, about a nazir, it states נזר אלקיו על ראשו, "for the crown of His G-d is on his head." It is wondrous – all these

7. The Lev Simchah added, "The practical lesson is that when one has trouble overcoming a certain yetzer hara, he should make a kabbalah to refrain from something, and in the merit of the kabbalah, he will receive divine strength and aid from above, to be able to overcome that yetzer hara."

8. Rebbe Yisrael of Husiatyn zt'l was once walking with his gabbai, and a passing goy was impressed by the majestic appearance of the rebbe. He asked the gabbai, "Who is this rabbiner?"

The gabbai replied, "He isn't a regular rabbiner. He is a Vunder (Wonder) Rabbiner."

"What does a Vunder Rabbiner mean?" the goy asked.

The Husiatyner Rebbe overheard their conversation and replied: "There are rabbis who lead a city; other rabbis influence a neighborhood. But there is a rabbi who rules over himself. He is a Vunder Rabbiner."

The Husiatyner Rebbe's son-in-law brings this story in his sefer Ohalei Yaakov. He adds the Ibn Ezra we quoted above, that איש... כי יפליא, means that he did something amazing (דבר פלא) because most people follow their temptations. A person in control over his desires is indeed wondrous.

levels in return for a small prishus of abstaining from wine for thirty days.⁹

Even after the thirty days of the nazirus pass, the nazir remains with his sanctity. The Alshich proves this from (6:20) וְאַחֵר יִשְׁתֶּה, "Afterward [when the nazirus is completed], the nazir may drink wine." Even after the term ends and he drinks wine, the Torah still calls him a nazir. This is because his short stint of prishus made an imprint on him, and he is no longer the same person as before.

The Mishnah in Makos (2:6) tells us that when one kills his fellow man accidentally, he must go to arei miklat and live there until the kohen gadol dies. The problem is that the people in arei miklat might daven that the kohen gadol should die. Therefore, the Mishnah writes, "The mothers of the kohen gadol would supply clothes and food [for the people in arei miklat], so they won't daven that their children die."

The Gemara (Makos 11.) wonders why the mothers were concerned. Was it the kohen gadol's fault that they ended up in arei miklat?

The Gemara answers that the kohen gadol was, in fact, responsible "because he should have davened for his generation [that even accidental murders shouldn't occur], and he didn't daven."

The Gemara brings an incident where a person was eaten by a lion three parsah away from Reb Yehoshua ben Levi, and Eliyahu HaNavi didn't reveal himself to Reb Yehoshua ben Levi for three days. Reb Yehoshua ben Levi was held responsible for the death because he should have davened that such accidents shouldn't occur.

The Meshech Chachmah (6:8) writes that this is the reason a nazir who becomes tamei must bring a korban chatas. What is his sin, and why does he need atonement? The Meshech Chachmah answers that the nazir should have davened that people shouldn't die. Therefore, he is responsible for the death, similar to Reb Yehoshuah ben Levi and the kohen gadol. He has reached such a high level due to his nazirus that he becomes responsible for davening for his generation.

The Kli Yakar writes that the reason for the korban chatas is that he wasn't happy with his nazirus and the restrictions that he placed on himself. The proof is that he became tamei. The Kli Yakar writes, "If he were happy with his nazirus, he would be extra careful to avoid tumah. However, he wasn't cautious, proving he wasn't so happy with his nazirus." His lack of joy is an aveirah, for which he brings a korban chatas.

We must realize that one doesn't need to become a nazir to attain this great holiness. Whenever one refrains from indulging in

9. The Gemara (Sanhedrin 65:) explains the prohibition of (Devarim 18:11) דֹרֵשׁ אֶל הַמֵּתִים: "This is a person who refrains from food and sleeps in a cemetery to attain a ruach tumah, an impure spirit. When Reb Akiva would reach this pasuk, he would cry: 'If a person who refrains from eating in order to receive a ruach tumah can succeed in receiving the impure spirit, kal v'chomer if a person refrains from eating so that he can receive a ruach taharah, a pure, holy spirit, he will certainly succeed in attaining it.'"

The Baal HaTurim explains that the nazir isn't allowed to become tamei to a human corpse, so that everyone will know that the kedushah he attained is from a holy source, and not from tumah. This is because it is likely that people will notice that the nazir became a spiritual person, and they might suspect that it comes from the side of tumah. To prevent this, and for everyone to know that he has a spirit of kedushah, he may not become tamei to the dead.

The Baal HaTurim writes, שאם תשרה עליו שכינה מחמת נורו, שלא יאמרו שהוא דורש אל המתים, "If the Shechinah resides on him because he became a nazir, [we don't want] people to say that he was *doresh el hameisim* [and that he received his spirit by being contaminated from the dead]." This is the reason he is forbidden to become tamei.

unnecessary worldly pleasures, and practices prishus *l'shem shamayim*, he becomes extremely holy.¹⁰

Holding on to Inspiration

We made kabalos tovos on Shavuos, we accepted the Torah, we said *נעשה ונשמע*, and we were inspired. Now, we must make sure we keep these resolutions, אחרי, after Shavuos passes, too. The Imrei Emes zt'l said that this is alluded to in what appears to be a contradiction in the pesukim. It states (7:88) *זאת חנוכת המזבח אחרי המושח אתו*, "This is the chanukas hamizbeiach after it was anointed." And it states, (7:84), *זאת חנוכת המזבח ביום המושח אתו*, "This is the chanukas hamizbeiach on the day the mizbeiach was anointed." (See Rashi 7:84, who addresses this question.) The Imrei Emes zy'a says that the Torah writes *ביום* and *אחרי* to hint that when one merits a day of inspiration, he should make sure it remains אחרי, afterward, as well.¹¹

About *mattan Torah*, it states, *וקדשתם היום ומוחר*, "Sanctify yourselves today and tomorrow." The goal is *מוחר*, to hold on to the inspiration tomorrow – even after Shavuos passes.

Also, after *mattan Torah*, Hashem said (*Devarim* 5:27), *לך אמר להם שובו לכם לאהליכם*, "Tell the nation to return home."

The yetzer hara and the yetzer tov also say *שובו לכם לאהליכם*, that everyone must go home. They can't stay on the high, spiritual level of matan Torah forever. Nevertheless,

there is a fundamental difference between how the yetzer hara says these words and how the yetzer tov will say them. The yetzer hara says, *שובו לכם לאהליכם*, go back home and return to your life, as it was before matan Torah. The yetzer tov says, *שובו לכם לאהליכם*, you can't remain at your exalted level forever. You will have to return home. However, even when you go home, remember what you saw at matan Torah. Let the spiritual imprint of matan Torah influence all aspects of your life.

In *Oz Yashir* we say, *אמר אויב... שלל*, "The enemy says... שלל." *שלל* is *roshei teivos* שובו לכם לאהליכם, "return to your tents." The enemy is the yetzer hara, and he tells us to return to our tents, to our old ways. But we listen to the yetzer hatov, and he encourages us to allow the light of Shavuos to remain with us, even after returning home.

As it states in *Eishes Chayil*, *בטח בה לב בעלה*, *ושלל לא יחסר*. Even after *yom tov* passes (as implied by *שלל*, which stands for *שובו לכם לאהליכם*) we remain with the inspiration and passion for Torah we had on Shavuos.

The *chachamim* call the *yom tov*, *שבועות* and the Torah calls it, *עצרת*.

שבועות means to swear. The Beis Avraham zt'l says that this is because on Shavuos everyone gives his word and promise to keep the Torah. It can be compared to soldiers who are sworn in when they are conscripted into the army. We joined Hashem's army, so we must also give our

10. A man once came to Reb Yechezkel Levenstein zt'l, telling him that he had been married for many years and still had no children. Reb Yechezkel advised him to make a kabbalah to learn mussar for ten minutes every day. The man made this kabbalah, and his wife became pregnant immediately afterward. People were amazed at the miracle. Reb Yechezkel said, "It isn't a miracle. When a person makes a kabbalah tovah, he becomes a new person. So, even if there was a gezeirah on the previous person, he is now a new person. On this new person, it was never decreed not to have children."

11. A Stoliner chassid was with his Rebbe, the Beis Aharon, for Shavuos. When he returned home, his friends asked him, "How did the *yom tov* pass?"

He replied, "It didn't pass. It went into me."

Our goal is to internalize the inspiration of *yom tov* and for it to change us.

word and promise that we will accept the yoke of Heaven and abide by all the Torah's laws.

The other name for Shavuos is עֲצֵרֶת, which means to hold back. It is called עֲצֵרֶת, because accepting the Torah on Shavuos isn't sufficient. We must עֲצֵרֶת, hold on to it, even after *yom tov* passes.¹²

Before the Torah was given, the *pasuk* describes Har Sinai as follows (*Shemos* 19:16): וַיְהִי קוֹלוֹת וּבְרָקִים וַעֲנַן כְּבֹד עַל הַהָר "There were voices and lightning, and a heavy cloud on the mountain." It mentions the lightning, which shines for a moment, and then it disappears.

During *mattan Torah*, it states (20:15), וְכָל הָעָם רָאוּ אֶת הַקּוֹלוֹת וְאֶת הַלְפִידִים, "The entire nation saw the voices and the torches..." This *pasuk* mentions torches, which, unlike lightning, burn for a long time.

The *Divrei Shmuel zt'l* explains that before *mattan Torah*, they didn't have vessels to accept the tremendous holy light; therefore, it came like lightning and immediately disappeared. During *mattan Torah*, they received the vessels to retain the Torah's glow and spirituality. Now the inspiration can last and endure.

12. The Nesivos Shalom *zt'l* once asked some *bachurim*, students of his yeshivah, "When is the moment *mattan Torah* happens for us?"

One *bachur* replied, "It's on Shavuos, by *alos hashachar*."

Another *bachur* said, "It happens when we read the *aseres hadibros*."

A third *bachur* mentioned some other time.

The Rebbe replied, "*Kabalas haTorah* happens when a person accepts the yoke of Torah."

Based on this, *kabalas haTorah* can happen throughout the year, too. Whenever one accepts the yoke of Heaven, that is *kabalas haTorah*.

Rebbe Yissachar Dov of Belz *zt'l* said, "There are many deeds of *chassidus* and righteousness that a person can do, but the most precious service before Hakadosh Baruch Hu is to make Hashem happy through our Torah study. The proof is that the *yetzer hara* doesn't try as hard to prevent people from acting with *chassidus*, as he invests all his strength to prevent people from studying Torah."

We thank Hashem, מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לְךָ שְׁשֵׁמַת חֲלַקְנוּ מִיּוֹשְׁבֵי בֵּית הַמְדֻרָשׁ וְלֹא שְׁמַת חֲלַקְנוּ מִיּוֹשְׁבֵי קַרְנוֹת, "We thank you, Hashem, that you placed our portion among those who sit in the beis medresh, and not among those who sit at the street corners."

In *Tikun Leil Shavuos*, we read the beginnings and the ends of several parts of the Torah. It is like we are reading the corners, the קַרְנוֹת. We thank Hashem that we are not יוֹשְׁבֵי קַרְנוֹת, only studying the corners of the Torah. *Be'ezras Hashem*, we will study Torah throughout the year, and we will learn entire *masechtos* – and not just its corners. (Attributed to the Ben Ish Chai *zt'l*).

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