

Chitas for Monday, Parshas Yisro Yud-Beis Shevat, 5785

*For the safety and security of the Yidden in Eretz Yisrael
and the success of the soldiers fighting for its protection*

לעילוי נשמת ר' יוסף בנימין בן ר' מנשה קאלטמאן
~ by Rabbi Aryeh & Esther Kaltmann ~

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CHUMASH :: Parshas Yisro - Sheini with Rashi

Before we learn how Hashem gives the Yidden the Torah, which is the main point of this parsha, first we finish learning what the Torah tells us about Yisro, even though this happened later. This story happened the day after Moshe Rabbeinu came down with the second set of Luchos on Yom Kippur, which we learn in Parshas Ki Sisa.

Yisro saw that Moshe was spending a long time answering people's questions and judging people who had an argument. Moshe would be sitting, and everyone there would stand.

Yisro asked Moshe why everyone needed to stand — you don't need to stand in front of a judge!

Moshe explained that they weren't standing because of him, they were standing because they were coming to hear the words of Torah that he heard from Hashem.

Yisro told Moshe that he didn't think it was a good idea for Moshe to teach all of the Yidden himself. It is too much for one person to teach an entire nation! He suggested that if Hashem agreed, Moshe should choose certain Yidden to be judges for groups of Yidden. This way they won't have to ask every question to Moshe Rabbeinu.

Yisro told Moshe to look for people that deserve to be judges. They should be rich so that they don't need to make other people happy to get things from them. They should have *Yiras Shomayim*, so they will be trying to do the right thing. They should be people who keep their promises, so people will trust them and listen to

them. And they should be people who don't like to fight about money.

There should be one person in charge of every group of 10 Yidden, one in charge of every group of 50, another in charge of every group of 100, and another in charge of every group of 1,000! Only if someone asks them a very hard question that they can't answer themselves, THEN they should come to Moshe.

Yisro told Moshe that if Hashem agrees and he does this, everything will work out well for everybody.

TEHILLIM :: 66 - 68

Today's *kapitelach* Tehillim are *Samach-Vov*, *Samach-Zayin*, and *Samach-Ches*.

In *Kapitel Samech-Vov* (66), it says "**Hofach Yam LaYabasha**" — Hashem made the water into dry land, during *Kriyas Yam Suf*.

Chassidus explains that this is like what happens when *Moshiach* comes!

Usually, there is water that covers over the sea. But when Hashem makes it into dry land, like by *Kriyas Yam Suf*, we can see what's inside, what's usually hiding!

When *Moshiach* comes, we'll be able to see things that are hidden. Now we can't see how Hashem makes everything be, but when *Moshiach* comes we will see it!

TANYA :: Likutei Amarim Perek Chof-Gimmel

The Alter Rebbe taught us a little bit about Achdus Hashem so that we will understand why any mitzvah we do is connecting to Achdus Hashem. In today's Tanya we learn about how a Yid becomes one with Hashem through Torah and mitzvos.

When we do a *mitzvah*, we are connected with the *ratzon* of Hashem. We also have this connection when we learn Torah, but in even a greater way!

Why?

When we understand or speak the words of Torah, we are thinking or saying the *ratzon* of Hashem! For example, *halacha* tells us what the *ratzon* of Hashem is. If we learn that, we have the *ratzon* of Hashem in our head! So we aren't just CONNECTED to the *ratzon*, but we have Hashem's *ratzon* inside of us! That's an even stronger connection.

The unity that a Yid has with Hashem by learning Torah is so special, that it is even stronger than the way it is in the *Ruchnius* worlds! Even though our *guf* doesn't feel it, our *neshama* feels that we're united with the *ratzon* of Hashem even more than *malachim* are!

That's why the *Gemara* says that the *mitzvah* of learning Torah is better in some ways than all other *mitzvos* — even *davening*! When we *daven*, we bring the unity of Hashem in *Ruchnius* worlds, but Torah brings even a greater unity.

HAYOM YOM :: Yud-Beis Shevat

The mind and the heart are like two separate worlds — they are very different!

A person's MIND makes him feel very calm, and sometimes "cold" (not excited).

But a person's HEART can make him feel very warm and excited!

One way isn't better than the other — Hashem wants us to use both: To use our mind to calmly teach ourselves how to serve Hashem, but with the *chayus* (warmth) of our heart!

SEFER HAMITZVOS :: Shiur #321 - Mitzvas Lo Saasei #317, Asei #178

In today's Rambam, we are finishing the set of halachos called Sanhedrin, and starting to learn Hilchos Eidus, which is all about witnesses. So today, we will have one mitzvah from Hilchos Sanhedrin, and one mitzvah about Eidus.

1) (Mitzvas Lo Saasei #317) We aren't allowed to curse another Yid.

We learn this *mitzvah* from a *posuk* in Parshas Kedoshim: לא תקלל חרש

This *posuk* means, "You should not curse a person who is deaf." The Rambam explains how we learn today's *mitzvah* from this *posuk*:

When someone gets angry, he wants to take revenge — to hurt the other person the way he feels that he was hurt, to make things "fair." Depending on how angry he is, he might think it is fair to destroy the other person's things, or even to hurt him very badly! Then he will calm down and not be angry anymore.

If the other person did something small, he might only be a little angry. He will feel better after he screams at the other person, or even only curses him quietly, so the other person can't hear.

We might think that there is nothing wrong with this! Why should it matter if we curse someone when he can't hear, and it won't hurt his feelings?

That's why the Torah says "don't curse a person who is deaf." We might think, why should it matter if we curse someone who is deaf and can't hear?

The Torah teaches us that the reason why not to curse another person is not only that the other person will hear and feel bad, but because WE shouldn't be cursing other people! We are not allowed to let ourselves get angry and take revenge on another person.

The details of this *mitzvah* are explained in *Mesechta Shevuos perek Daled*.

2) (Mitzvas Asei #178) If a person knows about something that Beis Din is judging, he needs to come be a witness, an *Eid*.

We learn this *mitzvah* from a *posuk* in Parshas Vayikra: והוא עד או ראה או ידע

The details of this *mitzvah* are explained in *Mesechta Sanhedrin* and *Mesechta Shevuos*.

RAMBAM :: Hilchos Sanhedrin - Eidus

Perek Chof-Hey: In this *perek*, we learn *halachos* about how a judge needs to treat his community. (This is probably important for ANY person who works with the community!) The Rambam reminds a judge not to act in a mean way to the people, because even if they are simple and not so *ruchnius'dik*, they are the children of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov!

Mr. George Rohr, a big Baal Tzedakah who supports many of the Rebbe's mosdos, once came to the Rebbe. He wanted to share good news with the Rebbe, so he told the Rebbe about a minyan he organized for Yidden who didn't have any Jewish background.

“What?!” the Rebbe asked. Mr. Rohr repeated what he said.

“Go back to them and tell them that they DO have a Jewish background!” the Rebbe said. “They are all children of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov!”

Judges also need to be careful not to do things that would make people lose *kavod* for them, like getting drunk at parties.

We also learn that people need to have *kavod* for the *Beis Din*, and come if a *Beis Din* tells them to. The *Beis Din* is careful when they call someone, to make sure it is possible for him to come. For example, they don’t call people to come to a case on a Friday, because everyone is busy getting ready for Shabbos.

Perek Chof-Vov: Now the Rambam teaches *halachos* about the punishment for cursing. Even though there is already a *mitzvah* not to curse ANYONE, there is a special *mitzvah* not to curse a judge. Someone who does, gets *malkos* twice.

The last *halacha* reminds us how it is *asur* to go to a non-Jewish court (*Arka’us*). Yidden take care of their own disagreements in a *Beis Din*. Only if someone refuses to come to *Beis Din* are we allowed to take him to court.

Now we start a new set of *halachos* about witnesses.

Perek Alef: If someone is able to be a witness, he has a *mitzvah* to say what he knows in *Beis Din*.

We learn the way the judges ask the witnesses questions, in order that we can make sure they are really telling the truth, and that all of the witnesses agree. They first ask seven basic questions, about when and where the thing happened. Then they ask more details, like “Which *melacha* did he do?”

But the judges should also ask questions that don’t have to do with the specific thing, just to make sure that the person is telling the truth. For example, they will ask what color clothes the person was wearing.

RAMBAM– PEREK ECHAD :: Hilchos Shaar Avos HaTumos - Perek Daled

The Rambam explains how bugs and creepy-crawling things make things *Tomei*.

INYANA D'YOMA :: Chassidishe Parsha

One of the *maamarim* in this week’s *Torah Ohr* is the famous *maamar* called “*Bachodesh Hashlishi*.” This *maamar* speaks about the special *koach* Torah gives us!

The *guf* can sometimes make it hard for the *neschama* to do what it is supposed to. But Torah can change that!

Torah is called “*Oz Vetushiya*.” It is *Oz* (strength), because it gives strength to the *neschama*, and it is *Tushiya* (a helper), because it helps us make the *Yetzer Hara* weaker.

To get this *koach* of Torah in the best way, the Alter Rebbe tells us that we need to learn Torah in a special way: We need to remember that it’s HASHEM’S Torah, like by *Matan Torah*, when we could SEE that Hashem was giving it to us.

Whenever we learn Torah, we should remember that the words we are saying are the same words that were said by *Matan Torah*, and the same words that the *Chachomim* explained to us over the years. We are just repeating them! This is called learning Torah with *bittul*. We aren’t thinking about ourselves, we are thinking about the Torah of Hashem!

When we learn Torah this way, the Torah has the *koach* of *Oz Vetushiya*, so we can have *hatzlacha* in doing our *shlichus* in the world, with a strong *neshama* and a weak *Yetzer Hara*.

This maamar was said by the Alter Rebbe in preparation for the Yom Tov of Shavuos. It was put in Torah Ohr by the Tzemach Tzedek, because it is also connected to Yisro where we learn about Matan Torah. The Rebbe sometimes asked that it be learned on Shavuos, and would speak about the maamar both on Shavuos and in Parshas Yisro.

In Tof-Shin-Nun-Beis, the last sicha of Parshas Yisro that we heard from the Rebbe, the Rebbe spoke a lot about this maamar.

TEFILLAH :: It's All One Thing - Pesukei Dezimra

The Alter Rebbe explains in *Shulchan Aruch* that from *Boruch She'amar* until after *Shemoneh Esrei* is counted as one long piece of *davening*. Each part is supposed to be right before the next.

Pesukei Dezimra is like a sandwich, between the two *brachos* of *Boruch She'amar* (the *bracha* before) and *Yishtabach* (the *bracha* afterwards). To keep the *brachos* together with the words of praise to Hashem, we are not supposed to make any interruptions.

After *Yishtabach* comes the *bracha* of *Yotzer Ohr*, the first of the *Birchos Kriyas Shema*. We shouldn't interrupt there either, because even though we say *Shema* in between, the *Chachomim* said that we should say *Pesukei Dezimra* to praise Hashem before *Shemoneh Esrei*. So we shouldn't do anything except saying *Shema* before *davening Shemoneh Esrei*.

Shema and *Shemoneh Esrei* also need to go together because it is a *mitzvah* to *daven* right after speaking about *Geulah*, "Somech Geulah l'Tefillah."

Davening is not just a collection of many different paragraphs, it is one long *inyan* which we should do without interruptions!

There are some times when the Shulchan Aruch tells us we are allowed to interrupt, for a mitzvah or other reasons, which are part of the halachos of Hefsek BeTefillah.

See the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, siman nun-alef se'if daled

HALACHOS HATZRICHS :: Kiddush

Before we make *Kiddush* we make sure that the *Challah* that is on the table is covered.

Why?

There are three reasons:

1) On our Shabbos table, we are careful to have *Lechem Mishnah*, two *challos*. This reminds us of the double portion of *mohn* we got on *Erev Shabbos*. Before the *mohn* fell every day, Hashem made dew fall on the ground, and then more dew fell on top of the *mohn* to cover it. To remember this, we have a *challah* board under our *Lechem Mishnah*, and a cover on top, like the dew that was under and over the *mohn*.

2) After *Kiddush*, which speaks about the *kavod* of Shabbos, we show this *kavod* to Shabbos by having a *seudah*! Many years ago, they would only bring out the table after making *Kiddush*, to show that this is a special *seudah* just in honor of Shabbos. Nowadays, our table is already set, but we keep the *challah* covered until after *Kiddush*, so we can later uncover it and show that this is the *seudah Lekavod Shabbos* that we were talking

about!

3) According to the *Seder Birchos Hanehenin*, the *bracha* on *Challah* comes before the *bracha* on wine. Since really we should be making the *bracha* first on the *challah*, we cover the *challah* during *Kiddush* so it isn't "embarrassed" that we skip it and make the *bracha* on wine first.

See Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch siman Reish-Ayin-Alef se'if Yud and Yud-Zayin, and the Tur siman Reish-Ayin-Alef

GEULAH U'MOSHIACH :: Everyone Will Hear About It

In the beginning of this week's *parsha*, Yisro joins the Jewish people!

The Torah tells us that he hears about the many *nissim* that Hashem did for the Yidden, and wants to learn from such a special nation!

This is also something that will happen when *Moshiach* comes! The *Navi* says, "*Kimei Tzeis'cha Me'eretz Mitzrayim Avenu Niflaos*," that there will be *nissim* like there were at the time of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. All of the nations will hear about these *nissim*, and they will all want to learn how to serve Hashem from such a special nation.

See sicha to children, Yud-Zayin Shevat Tof-Shin-Mem-Gimmel

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