

CHAYUS

A Shabbos Stimulus

THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

*In Loving Memory of Itta bas Yosef Mordechai ע"ה and Tzvi Daniel ע"ה ben ע"ה David שי' Ainsworth
Dedicated by David & Eda Schottenstein*

Erev Shabbos Parshas Behar, 5782 – May 20, 2022

ערב שבת פרשת בהר, י"ט אייר, ה'תשפ"ב

כתר שם טוב

PORTIONS OF LIGHT

Adapted from
Keter Shem Tov

The Master Key

The divine service known as *dveikus*, “cleaving,” means connecting and attaching oneself to the words of their prayer and Torah study. It is a state of attachment to G-d through cleaving to the letters of Torah study and prayer. One firmly attaches his thoughts and inner self to the inner spirituality that is contained within these letters.

This is the deeper significance of the verse describing the relationship between G-d and the Jewish people, *yishakeini mi-neshikos pihu*, “Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth” (Shir HaShirim 1:2), referring to a “cleaving of spirit to spirit,” the spirit of a person who mouths the let-

ters to the spirit of G-d that is contained within the sacred letters. It is similarly stated, *im tishkevun bein shefatayim*, “If you rest between the borders” (Tehillim 68:14), where the word can be read *sefasayim*, between the lips. One who is attached to a word of Torah or prayer draws out the word, for he does not want to separate from it.

Everyone is able to achieve a state of *dveikus*. Even the most unlearned Jew can reach the heights of *dveikus*! And this is the key that opens every lock in heaven.

Keter Shem Tov, Par. 44a-b, 192, addendum par. 11

גאולה

GEULAH

Yalkut Moshiach uGeulah al HaTorah
Translated by **Yaakov Paley**

Going Home

The prophet Yeshayah proclaimed, “*It will occur on that day that He will sound the big shofar.*” Now, what difference does it make if the shofar is large or small? Rather, the shofar will not necessarily be great in physical dimensions, but in its effect. According to the laws of Yovel, at the sounding of the shofar every Hebrew bondsman is freed and returns to his family, and landowners receive back their hereditary portions in the Holy Land. These actions involve distinct individuals—one is a land-

owner, the other a servant. The great shofar of the redemption, by contrast, will secure both achievements for the very same individuals. Thus the verse of the great shofar continues, “*And they will come, those who are lost in the land of Ashur, and those who are oppressed in the land of Egypt, in Yerushalayim.*” The entire Jewish nation will be set free from exile and it will simultaneously receive its ancestral homeland back.

Tzemach Dovid

Faith—The Natural Conduit of Blessings

While it is the study of Torah and the performance of Mitzvos that draws Divine energy into the lower worlds, it is also accomplished through faith. The Torah describes Avraham's trust in G-d as "an act of righteousness"; the Midrash teaches that Jewish people left Egypt in the merit of their faith, alone.

Why is faith so powerful? Kabbalah explains that the principal way to subdue harsh decrees is by awakening the Divine virtue of Truth. Since faith is a vessel capable of channeling Truth into this world, it follows that one who possesses perfect Faith—the vessel of Truth—is permanently endowed with the power to instantly and directly banish harsh decrees.

Furthermore, individuals with imperfect faith can also banish harsh decrees, albeit indirectly, by routinely performing acts of faith—such as keeping Shabbat each week (despite the apparent risk to their livelihoods) or refraining from working the fields every seventh "Shemittah" year (despite the apparent risk to their crop yield).

In the merit of acts of faith, and one's endeavor to improve his faith, one can draw Divine energy into the lower worlds and banish harsh decrees. Unlike individuals with perfect faith, however, these individuals do not have the power to instant-

ly draw down blessings and banish harsh decrees. Their impact only manifests after G-d Himself orders the blessing to descend.

With this introduction, we can now answer a question that arises from the following verses in this week's Torah portion: "And if you should say, 'What will we eat in the seventh year? We will not sow, and we will not gather in our produce!' Know that I will command My blessing for you in the sixth year, and it will yield produce for three years" (Vayikra 25:20-21). One might ask: why preface the promise that Jewish people will enjoy a surplus in the sixth year by first describing individuals who lack faith and worry about what they will eat in the seventh year?

The answer is that even those of imperfect faith, who question what they will eat in the seventh year, will enjoy a surplus in the sixth year if they perform an act of faith, such as observing Shemittah. Like individuals of perfect faith, these skeptics will be able to draw blessings into the world. But since their faith is imperfect, the impact of their actions will not be automatic, and will occur only after G-d "commands His blessing" and orders the blessings to descend.

Ohr Torah, par. 122

Highly Connected

For they (the Jewish people) are my servants, whom I have taken out from the land of Egypt—they cannot be sold into slavery (Behar, 25:42)

My deed of ownership precedes and voids any other.

- Rashi's commentary

In redeeming us from Egypt the Almighty made us subject to Him alone, and thus inherently and eternally free: no force or law on earth has any jurisdiction over the Jew.

- Rabbi Yehudah Lowe of Prague (the 'Maharal')

The mikveh (ritual bathhouse) in Primishlan, home to Rabbi Meir'l Primishlaner, was located at the foot of a steep hill. Even under the best of conditions it was a precarious climb down to the bathhouse and back up

to town; but during the winter months, when the hill was covered with ice, the slope was completely impassable: also the most agile and daring of the young men were forced to give up after the first few steps. From the

first freeze to spring thaw, the townspeople were forced to take a long, roundabout route to the mikveh.

All but one. The elderly Rebbe of Primishlan would walk down the icy slope every morning to immerse himself before praying. Straight as a rod, he would make his unfaltering way to the bathhouse and back.

One day, two young skeptics set out to prove that there was nothing extraordinary about Rabbi Meir's

daily trip. But their attempt met with dismal failure: bruised, bloodied, and with half a dozen broken bones between them, they walked nowhere for a good few weeks. Later, one of them asked Rabbi Meir'l: "How do you do it?"

Said the Rebbe of Primishlan: "When one is connected above, one does not fall below. Meir'l is connected above, so he does not fall below."

לקוטי שיחות

A SICHA

By: ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org

Adapted from the works of the [Lubavitcher Rebbe](http://LubavitcherRebbe.org)

Divine Truths In A Worldly Reality

The Context: In many years we read the fourth chapter of *Pirkei Avos* on the Shabbos of *parshas Behar*. Lag BaOmer, which commemorates the passing of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, also often falls out in the week of *parshas Behar*.

In the fourth chapter of *Avos*, there is a teaching of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai: "Rabbi Shimon would say: There are three crowns—the crown of Torah, the crown of *kehunah*, and the crown of kingship—but the crown of a good name surmounts them all" (*Avos* 4:13).

Being that this specific teaching was placed in the chapter that is read during the week of Rabbi Shimon's *yahrzeit*, it surely expresses a fundamental essence of his life's work, and it follows that it should align with the theme of *parshas Behar* as well.

The Preliminary Explanation: *Parshas Behar* develops from a plane of spiritual transcendence to describe the possibility of moral degeneration. The name of the *parshah* refers to Mount Sinai, where the Jewish people beheld G-d face to face and received the Torah. Yet the Torah goes on to describe the cascading effects of one negative choice—disobeying the *shemittah* laws—which can result in a person eventually selling himself as a slave to a gentile (See *Rashi* to *Vayikra* 26:1).

This structure is deliberate: The deepest divine revelations, "Sinai," are meant to address and permeate the worldly reality in which a person is capable of falling into the deepest darkness. Torah is not intended to remain "on the mountain"—it must address the human being in his most spiritually desperate moment.

Rabbi Shimon's statement in the fourth chapter of *Avos* expresses this same theme, which also

embodies Rabbi Shimon's essential contribution to the world.

The Explanation: Rabbi Shimon was the prime exemplar of a sage for whom "Torah study was his occupation" (*Toraso Umnaso*). His entire existence was dedicated to Torah study for its own sake. And yet, Rabbi Shimon understood that his role was not to remain ensconced in an ivory tower of Torah, but rather, to influence and uplift others as an outcome of his studies.

To explain: In the grand task of transforming this world into a home for G-d, there are two roles to be played. One segment of the population must engage with the material reality, infusing it with Divine meaning through the performance of physical *mitzvos*. But if they are entangled in the material world, they will be unable to elevate it; instead, they will become prisoners to the reality they are meant to transform.

Therefore, those whose primary calling is the performance of *mitzvos* need inspiration from those who are detached from the physical, who are purely devoted to Torah. These spiritual transcendentalists can ignite the souls of the Jews entrenched in the world so that they, too, can experience that transcendence throughout the day, rejuvenating them and empowering them to perform their task of material transformation.

Conversely, for those devoted to Torah study to be able to inspire those devoted to *mitzvah* observance, the former cannot be detached from the people and their reality; they must put the people and their needs at the forefront of their Torah study. The focus and intent of their study must be the impact they hope to have on the rest of the population.

But how does one contain two opposing thrusts—to be immersed in Torah exclusively, and to have one’s mind trained on the people engaged in the world? To do this, a sage must relinquish any personal spiritual ambition; his entire being must be dedicated to fulfilling G-d’s will. When the sage’s entire existence is infused with G-dliness, he can (like G-d) contain opposites.

Rabbi Shimon personified this fusion—he was involved in deep spiritual exploration, while at the same time, he had a tangible impact on the world around him. The *Talmud* relates that Rabbi Shimon hid in a cave for twelve years, immersing himself in mystical study. After emerging from the cave, his spiritual gaze was so intense that “wherever he gazed was incinerated immediately.” He returned to the cave for another year, after which he emerged once again. This time, “wherever Rabbi Shimon directed his gaze was healed” (*Shabbos* 33b). His pure dedication to Torah was suffused with an awareness of those engaged with the world.

And at the end of Rabbi Shimon’s life, on Lag BaOmer, this theme reached its full expression when he revealed the deepest secrets of the Divine

to his students while on his deathbed (*Zohar, Idra Zuta*, 287b). These secrets were known to other sages, but they would not reveal them. Rabbi Shimon, whose life’s work was to fuse the highest spirituality with the lowest physical reality, brought these mystical secrets to light.

This is the meaning of the *mishnah*, which says, “Rabbi Shimon would say: There are three crowns—the crown of Torah... but the crown of a good name surmounts them all.” Commentators explain that the “crown of a good name” refers to those involved with physical *mitzvos*. Rabbi Shimon addresses his colleagues who bear the “crown of Torah”—those who are solely dedicated to pure Torah study—and urges them to place the “crown of a good name” above the crown of Torah, meaning, to orient their Torah study toward the goal of inspiring those engaged with the world.

Thus *parshas Behar*, Lag BaOmer, and the fourth chapter of *Avos* all coalesce around one theme—the need to fuse the highest mystical truths and revelations with the lowest worldly reality.

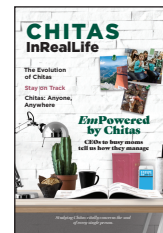
Likkutei Sichot Vol. 17, p. 303ff.

מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

SHABBOS CHITAS / RAMBAM GUIDE

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