

We read in this week's *Parashah* (14:1), "You are children to *Hashem*, your *Elokim*." *Midrash Kohelet Rabbah* comments: We read (*Kohelet* 4:8), "There is One, and there is no second, and He has no son or brother. . ." "There is One"--This is *Hashem*, about Whom we read (*Devarim* 6:4), "*Hashem* is our *Elokim*, *Hashem* is the One and Only." "There is no second"--*Hashem* has no partner. Nevertheless, *Hashem* loves us, the Jewish People, and calls us His "children," as we read (in our *Parashah*), "'You are children to *Hashem*," and His "brothers," as we read (*Tehilim* 122:8), "For the sake of My brothers." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Yaakov Meir Shechter *shlita* (*Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshivat Sha'ar Ha'shamayim* in *Yerushalayim*) writes: These expressions reveal, on the one hand, how lofty the souls of the Jewish People are, and, on the other hand, how humble *Hashem* is, for He loves the Jewish People and connects to us as if we were His children and siblings. This is something on which we should reflect.

The *Midrash Tanna D'vei Eliyahu* records: *Hashem* says, "There are two things in the world that I love completely: the Torah and the Jewish People." Hearing this, someone asked *Eliyahu Ha'navi*, "Which does *Hashem* love more?" *Eliyahu Ha'navi* responded, "People say that He loves the Torah more, but I say that He loves the Jewish People more." The *Zohar* adds: "If people knew how much *Hashem* loves them, they would roar like lions cubs as they pursue a connection with Him." R' Shechter notes: This applies to every single Jew--no exceptions. (*Sefer Osef Amarim: Midot* p.330)

Shabbat

The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 118b) teaches: If only the Jewish People would observe two *Shabbatot* in accordance with the law, they would be redeemed immediately. [Until here from the *Gemara*]

R' Yitzchak Hutner *z"l* (1906-1980; *Rosh Yeshiva* of *Yeshiva Chaim Berlin* in *Brooklyn, N.Y.*) notes that we allude to the connection between *Shabbat* and the Redemption in the poem *Lecha Dodi*, which we recite on Friday night. There we read, among other stanzas, "Shake off the dust--arise! Put on your splendid clothes, My people, through the son of *Yishai* the *Bethlehemite*! Draw near to my soul--redeem it!"

R' Hutner observes: The *Shulchan Aruch* / Code of Jewish Law expressly requires one to begin *Shabbat* preparations on Friday morning. This is not simply a manifestation of the general requirement to perform *Mitzvot* with *Zerizut* / diligence, R' Hutner writes. Rather, as *Rambam z"l* writes: "One should sit and wait solemnly to receive the 'face' of *Shabbat*, as if one were going to greet a king." In order to accomplish this, one must begin his *Shabbat* preparations in plenty of time. [The expression, "the face of *Shabbat*" will be explained next week, *iy"H*.]

R' Hutner continues: Just as *Shabbat* is a "little bit of *Olam Ha'ba*" (in our Sages' words), so waiting for *Shabbat* to arrive is akin to *Tzipiyah le'yeshuah* / anticipating the redemption. More than that, anticipating the redemption happens primarily in one's thoughts, while preparing for *Shabbat* elevates that anticipation to the level of action.

Appropriately, R' Hutner adds, we mention King David ("the son of *Yishai* the *Bethlehemite*") in the quoted stanza of *Lecha Dodi*. *Hashem* did not permit David to build the *Bet Hamikdash*, yet a number of verses--for example, *Tehilim* 30:1--credit him with doing so because of his great anticipation for its building. (*Pachad Yitzchak: Shabbat-Sukkot* p.108)

Hamaayan / The Torah Spring

10815 Meadowhill Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901 / 301-775-9623

Send e-mail to: TheTorahSpring@gmail.com

Back issues at: www.TheTorahSpring.org

Donations to *Hamaayan* are tax deductible.



Sponsored by

Nathan and Rikki Lewin, in memory of his father
Harav Yitzchak ben Harav Aharon Lewin a"h (28 Av)

Micheline and David Peller
in memory of their daughter, Zipporah a"h bat David ר'ש

“You will rule over many nations, and over you they will not rule.” (15:8)

R' Yoel z"l (17th century or earlier) writes: Since the Torah contains no punctuation, the first part of this verse can be read, “You will rule over many nations, and over yourself.” A person should rule over himself so he does not sin. *(Sefer Ha'remazim Le'Rabbeinu Yoel)*

“You shall not eat Chametz with it [the Korban Pesach], for seven days you shall eat Matzot because of it, bread of affliction, for you departed from the land of Egypt Be'chipazon / in haste . . .” (16:3)

R' Aharon Lewin z"l Hy"d (the Reisher Rav; killed in the Holocaust) writes: From the laws of *Matzah*, we can learn how a person should conduct himself. *Halachah* requires that the dough for *Matzah* be kneaded with “*Mayim she'lanu*” / water that was drawn the day before and sat overnight. This teaches us that every act we undertake should be approached with deliberation, not jumped into suddenly without proper evaluation or preparation. Experience shows, R' Lewin writes, that people often get an idea and “run with it,” only to realize when it is too late that it was a bad idea.

In contrast, once the flour and water for the *Matzah* have been mixed, *Halachah* requires that the process proceed quickly and smoothly without interruption. This, R' Lewin writes, is how we should act once we have begun the deed or project about which we previously deliberated.

(Ha'drash Ve'ha'yun 111)

Why did *Bnei Yisrael* depart from the land of Egypt “*Be'chipazon*” / “in haste”? R' Shlomo Eliasof z"l (1841-1926; leading early 20th century kabbalist; grandfather of R' Yosef Shalom Elyashiv z"l) explains:

In Egypt, *Bnei Yisrael* were deeply mired in that nation's impurity. *Hashem* revealed His “Light” in Egypt because of His covenant with our Patriarchs, in order to weaken the impurity that, in effect, held *Bnei Yisrael* hostage. When He did so, He uprooted the *Yetzer Ha'ra* from *Bnei Yisrael* and sanctified them.

However, *Hashem's* design of the world requires that there be a *Yetzer Ha'ra* and that man exercise his *Bechirah* / free will to overcome it. Therefore, in order that the *Yetzer Ha'ra* not be destroyed entirely by *Hashem's* “Light,” *Hashem* had to make His revelation brief. Therefore, *Bnei Yisrael* had to leave in haste.

R' Eliasof adds: The prophet Yeshayah (52:12--next week's *Haftarah*) prophesies about the future redemption, “You shall not go forth *Be'chipazon*.” At that time, R' Eliasof explains, the *Yetzer Ha'ra* will, in fact, be eliminated. Therefore, there will be no reason for *Hashem* to limit His revelation and no reason for haste. *(Niglot Leshem Shvo V'achlamah)*

“See, Anochi / I present before you today a blessing and a curse.” (11:26)

R' Yehuda Modern z"l (1819-1893; *Rosh Yeshiva* in Sighet, Hungary) writes: Earlier commentaries quote a *Midrash* stating that the word “*Anochi*” in this verse alludes to the first of the Ten Commandments: “*Anochi* / I am *Hashem*, your *Elokim*.” However, the *Midrash* does not explain what the significance of this allusion is. It appears, R' Modern writes, that the message of the *Midrash* is as follows:

Our Sages teach that we are sustained in this world in the merit of our *Emunah* / faith. On the other hand, our Sages teach that we are not rewarded for our *Mitzvot* in this world; rather, the reward for our *Mitzvot* will be forthcoming in the World to Come. But how can this be? Is there not a commandment in the Torah that a worker be paid on the same day that he worked? Thus, we should be rewarded for our *Mitzvot* the same day we perform them!

The answer, R' Modern writes, is that there is an exception. Specifically the *Mitzvah* to pay workers the same day does not apply if workers were hired through an agent. [The reasoning for that *Halachah* is beyond the scope of this space.] Since *Hashem* gave the Torah through an agent (Moshe), *Hashem* is not obligated to pay us for observing the Torah on the same day as our *Mitzvah* performance, and He can pay us in the World to Come instead.

However, R' Modern continues, there are two *Mitzvot* which *Hashem* did teach us directly--the first two of the Ten Commandments, which our ancestors heard at Har Sinai directly from *Hashem*. For those *Mitzvot*, which encompass the commandment to have *Emunah*, *Hashem* must reward us in this world. Hence our Sages' teaching that we are sustained in this world in the merit of *Emunah*. “See,” says our verse, “because of *Anochi* I give you a blessing or curse today!” *(Pri Ha'eitz)*

“It shall be that the place where *Hashem*, your *Elokim*, will choose to rest His Name--there shall you bring everything that I command you: your elevation-offerings and your feast-offerings, your tithes and what you raise up with your hands, and the choicest of your vow offerings that you will vow to *Hashem*.” (12:11)

The “place where *Hashem*, your *Elokim*, will choose to rest His Name” is the *Bet Hamikdash*. Similarly, in his *Halachic* code, *Mishneh Torah*, R' Moshe ben Maimon z"l (*Rambam*; 1135-1204; Spain and Egypt) titled the laws of the *Bet Hamikdash*--“*Hilchot Bet Ha'bechirah*” / “The Laws of the Chosen House.”

R' Yitzchak Aryeh Wormser z"l (1768-1847; the “*Ba'al Shem* of Michelstadt) comments: The *Bet Hamikdash* is a physical “home” for *Hashem*. But the name “*Bet Ha'bechirah*” suggests that a person must also build a spiritual “home” for *Hashem* within himself. How? By exercising his *Bechirah* / free will appropriately to make good choices. As the verse (*Devarim* 30:19) says, “*U'vacharta ba'chaim*” / “Choose [eternal] life.”

(Ba'al Shem Mi'Michelstadt p.260)