

Parashas

Pinchas

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י"ט תמוז תשפ"ו

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י"ל ע"י

קהילת שבתי בבית ד'

בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הר"צ

רבי גמליאל הכהן

רבינובין שליט"א

# טיב הקהילה

English edition

באנגלית

טיב הפרשה

## טיב המערכת

משפחת החנוכי

The Chanochi Family

A certain child was sent by his mother to ask a question of one of the tzaddikim. The attendant opened the door, and when he saw the child standing at the entrance, he went in to the Tzaddik and informed him that at the entrance there was standing some "little child" with a question. The Tzaddik brought the child in, listened to the question, and related to it with all the proper respect.

After the child left, the Tzaddik rebuked his attendant: Why did you say that at the entrance there was standing a "little child"? You could have said "a child." The attendant was surprised: What difference does it make, "a child" or "a little child"? After all, he truly was a young child. The Rav explained to him: By saying "a little child," you diminished in my eyes the importance of the question, and I had to exert effort in order to relate to the question with the proper seriousness. And perhaps elsewhere you would cause, chas v'shalom, that they would relate to this child with disdain merely because of the addition of the word "little child."

After the plague, Hashem commanded to count Bnei Yisrael again, and this time there was a change in the manner of the counting. Bnei Yisrael were counted according to their tribes and also according to their families, and thus the Torah mentions each and every family with the addition of the letter ה at the beginning and the letter י at the end (26:5): "to Chanoch, the family of the Chanochi [החנוכי]." Rashi explains the meaning of this addition: "Because the nations would scorn them and say: What is the basis of these people tracing their lineage according to their tribes? Do they think that the Egyptians did not have dominion over their mothers? If they had dominion over their bodies, all the more so over their wives. Therefore, HaKadosh Baruch Hu placed His Name upon them, the letter ה on this side and the letter י on that side, to say: I testify about them that they are the children of their forefathers." According to the words of Rashi, Bnei Yisrael themselves knew that they were holy and pure, the children of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, and only the nations of the world would scorn them, and for their sake HaKadosh Baruch Hu added the letters of His holy Name to their names.

How many times can we determine outcomes through small additions, if someone small becomes a "tiny little one," and the like, and sometimes even without words, but merely with a curl of the nose, and that is enough to cause someone disgrace. And behold, Hashem added His holy Name upon Bnei Yisrael so that no Jew should be disgraced. If so, how careful must we be not to disgrace any member of Bnei Yisrael, and on the contrary, if it is within our ability to increase the honor of a Jew, certainly and unquestionably we should do so, just as the Creator Yisbarach conducts Himself.

Tiv HaTorah - Pinchas

ההבדל בין ישראל לעמים

*The difference between Israel and the nations*

אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא לִפְנֵיהֶם וְאֲשֶׁר יָבֹא לִפְנֵיהֶם וְאֲשֶׁר יוֹצִיאֵם וְאֲשֶׁר יָבִיאֵם וְלֹא תִהְיֶה עִדָּת יִהְיֶה כְצֹאֵן אֲשֶׁר אֵין לָהֶם רֹעֶה: (כ"ז)

Who will go out before them and come in before them, who will take them out and who will bring them in, and let the assembly of Hashem not be like sheep that have no shepherd. (27:17)

Rashi explains: Who will go out before them – Not in the way of the kings of other nations, who sit in their homes and send their armies off to war, but like I did, for I did battle against Sichon and Og as it says (21:34), 'אל תירא אותו' – 'Do not fear him'. And in the way Yehoshua acted, as it says (Yehoshua 5:13), 'הלונו אתה...' – 'Are you ours or are you of our enemies?' And similarly of Dovid it says (Shmuel I 18:16), 'כי הוא יוצא ובא לפנינו' – 'For he would go out and come before them', he would go out and lead in battle and come back in the lead.

There is a well known story of the last "blood libel" that took place about a hundred years ago, when the gentiles fabricated an accusation against a Jewish man named Mendel Beilis. At that time, the great leaders of Israel exerted tremendous efforts to save him from the death sentence that hovered over his head. During the course of the trial, the rabbis were required to appear before the ministers of the land to explain many statements of Chazal that speak negatively about the nations, because those statements had been collected by the prosecutors in order to prove their claim that, in the eyes of the Jewish people, the blood of a non-Jew is considered ownerless.

Among those statements was also the teaching of Rabban Shimon bar Yochai, brought in the Gemara (Bava Metzia 114b), on the posuk (Yechezkel 34:31), 'ואתן צאני צאן מרעיתי אדם אתם' – "And you are My flock, the flock of My pasture—you are adam" — "You are called adam, and gentiles are not called adam." The accuser claimed that this statement proves that gentiles are not considered as human beings in the eyes of the Jewish people, but rather like animals, whose blood is permitted chalilah.

In truth, in this statement, Rashbi indeed intended to express the lowliness of the nations, but he certainly did not intend to define them, in halachic terms, as animals and to permit their blood. However, the gentile judges, who had neither learned nor studied, understood that there was, seemingly, a justified claim here.

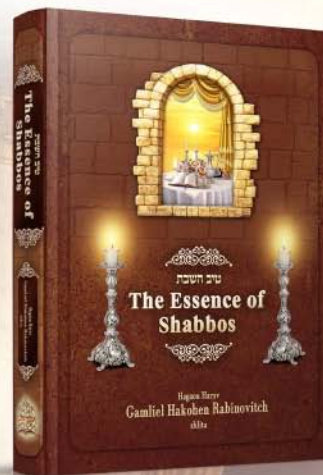
At that time, the lot fell upon the great gaon and righteous individual, Rabbi Meir Shapiro of Lublin zy"א. He was the one upon whom the ministers and judges imposed the task of explaining the statement in order to refute the claims of the accusers. Rabbi Meir understood that this statement could not be explained before them in its simple sense, for even if the judges would believe him that the statement does not intend to permit the blood of the nations, it would still arouse their anger over the very fact that the Torah speaks negatively about them. However, Hashem was at his side, and very quickly an idea came to his mind as to how to explain the statement in a way that even they would accept.

And so he expounded before them: Every object or creature in the world has a certain name, and with that name it is called both in the

singular and in the plural. The human species is called “ish,” and when speaking of many people, one says in the plural “anashim.” However, the human species is also called “adam,” and with this name we do not find a plural form. An individual is indeed called “adam,” but many are not called “adamim.” This comes to hint that the human species, although divided into many bodies, is in essence one single “adam.”

Now—Rabbi Meir continued and said before the ministers—you will certainly wonder at my words: in what sense can the human species be considered one body? Are they not completely separate bodies? However, if you observe the Jewish nation, you will see that although they are separate bodies, each one feels the pain of the other. The current trial—the “Beilis Trial”—proves this. You know well that all members of the Jewish nation, in all the places where they dwell, are at this time engaging in all kinds of efforts to bring about the release of Beilis. Most of them do not even know him at all—they merely heard that a Jew is imprisoned and that the fear of death hangs over his head, and immediately they gather as one person to do everything in their power to save him and extricate him from his distress. This means that they are all like limbs of one collective body; just as when the head is in pain, the legs exert themselves on its behalf and carry it to the doctor, so too all the limbs of this collective body strive to rescue one of their limbs that is in danger. However, among the nations you will

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not find such a phenomenon. If a false accusation is brought against one of them, aside from the lawyer he hires for a large sum of money, will there be anyone else who stands by his side?

This is the intent of Rashbi when he says, “You are called adam”—the designation “adam,” which expresses that all of you are like one person, applies only to Israel, for experience testifies that each one feels the pain of the other. “And gentiles are not called adam”—the nations are separate

bodies, where one does not feel the pain of the other, and even if the title “ish” may be fitting for them, the title “adam” is not fitting for them. It goes without saying that the judges openly accepted the realistic explanation of Rabbi Meir Shapiro.

A similar idea we find here in the words of Rashi. Moshe Rabbeinu says: “Not like the kings of the nations, who sit in their homes and send their armies out to war, but rather as I did, when I fought against Sichon and Og.” The kings of the nations and their soldiers are like separate bodies; one does not feel the distress of the other, and he is hardly concerned about consulting the lives of his soldiers. Therefore, when he sees that through war there is a chance to expand his kingdom and increase his honor, he does not hesitate to endanger them in battle.

This is not so with the leaders and kings of Israel. They feel the pain of their brethren and do not allow them to go out to war merely to increase honor and dominion. And when there is necessity, they share in the suffering of their brethren, and they themselves come to assist them in battle in order to ease their burden as much as possible. Not only that, but out of their great concern for others, they stand at the forefront—Moshe himself fought against Sichon and Og. And similarly, you find this with Yehoshua and with Dovid, as Rashi continues to explain.

### ‘שיעור בהשגחה’

#### ‘A shiur in hashgacha’

Every evening I have the privilege of participating in a Daf Yomi shiur that is delivered in a truly engaging way by our maggid shiur.

At the end of one of the shiurim, the Rav announced that in two days he would not be able to come give the shiur, and therefore he appointed me to give it in his place.

On the one hand, I was very excited by the honor, the attention, and the appreciation. But on the other hand, it was extremely nerve-wracking. I prepared the shiur thoroughly—I invested at least four hours preparing the daf—and then the moment arrived to give the shiur, when suddenly the maggid shiur himself appeared.

It turned out that his plans had unexpectedly been canceled, and he came to the shiur after all.

The Rav suggested that I give the shiur that I had prepared, but I firmly refused, and in the end the Rav agreed and delivered the shiur himself.

On the one hand, I was happy that the Rav had come, because I had been very nervous. But deep down it bothered me quite a bit—after

all, I had worked so hard and barely slept from the pressure, and in the end I did not give the shiur?!

For Shabbos we traveled to stay with my father-in-law and mother-in-law.

On Shabbos afternoon, about forty people gathered in the shul for the Daf Yomi shiur, but the maggid shiur did not show up. It turned out that he had an emergency, and they were now looking for someone to fill in. The organizer turned to me and asked if I could give the shiur. I asked which daf they were up to, and it turned out they were a bit behind—and they were holding exactly at the daf that I had prepared for the regular shiur I attend.

I delivered the shiur with enthusiasm and clarity, to the delight of all the participants. I told them about the hashgacha haelyonah that had led me to prepare this daf especially for them, and we were all strengthened in the awareness that everything is directed with precision from Above.

ה.ש.

### טיב ההשגחה

In the holy sefer Avodas Yisrael, authored by the saintly Maggid of Kozhnitz, Rav Yisrael Hopstein, he writes about the greatness of one who exerts himself and overcomes the darkness and obstacles that characterize the days known as between the straits, and about the wondrous, precious light hidden within them—light from which one can draw forth refined and radiant pearls.

These are his golden words: “Regarding the twenty-one days between the strait it states (Bereishis 38:24), וַיְהִי בְּמִשְׁלַשׁ יְדָשִׁים וַיֵּגֶד לַיהוּדָה לֵאמֹר זָנִיתָ תָמָר בְּלִתְךָ - And it happened that about three months later that it was told to Yehudah, Tamar your daughter-in-law.... This means that during these days, desires proliferate in the world. And this is the meaning of בְּלִתְךָ - your daughter-in-law; it refers to foreign loves and misplaced cravings, and alien thoughts. Holiness becomes concealed, and the forces of impurity intensify, chas veshalom.

And he thought her to be a harlot for she had covered her face (ibid. 15)—this teaches that during these three weeks, holiness is covered and hidden within layers of concealment.”

“Therefore, during these times, a person must strengthen himself with even greater resolve in the sanctity of the Borei Yisbarach—to draw forth light from within the darkness, to transform the concealment, and to reveal the holiness hidden within it.”

“On the contrary, during these times the holiness is exceedingly great. This may be compared to a precious stone: the more valuable the gem, the more it is encased in a coarse outer shell. As is known, precious stones are often clothed within inferior stones, such that a simple person does not recognize them. But one who understands recognizes that within lies a gem of immense worth. And the greater the value of the gem, the thicker and more concealing its outer covering. “The ‘stone’ alludes to the shell of impurity and the evil inclination, referred to as a heart of stone (Yechezkel 36:26).”

“It follows that when the forces of concealment grow strong and obscure holiness, one who overcomes them—who transforms and brings forth the hidden sanctity—reveals a concealed light and an immeasurable level of holiness. But this requires exceptional

## טיב המעשיות

### A Time of Concealment

כָּל רֹדְפֶיהָ הַשְׁיוּתָהּ בֵּין הַמְצָרִים (איכה א, ג)  
All who pursue her will attain her between the straits (Eichah 1:3).

effort.

As my teacher, Rav Dov Ber of Mezeritch, explained the pasuk, All who pursue her attains her between the straits — one who pursues holiness attains it specifically during these days, even more so than at other times.”

“This means that a person must settle his mind and direct his thoughts toward purity and holiness, turning away from idle matters and foreign thoughts, guarding himself so that they do not enter. He must strengthen the power of holiness within himself through prayer and through Torah.”

It is related that the holy Rav Zev Wolf of Zbarizh zt”l, would travel from town to town, as was the way of the righteous in earlier generations. These journeys were not mere wanderings, but were bound up with profound spiritual purposes—sharing in the sorrow of the Shechinah in exile, accompanying it, as it were, in its wandering.

However, due to the great poverty in his household, he did not possess a proper carriage with strong horses, as befitted a man of stature. Instead, he was forced to travel in a frail, rickety wagon drawn by an old, weak, emaciated horse. Thus they would advance slowly, step by painful step, according to the feeble pace of the animal.

While they were traveling, the skies suddenly darkened. Thick clouds gathered one after another, until a torrential downpour began to fall. The aged horse, indifferent to the storm, continued dragging itself forward through the rain.

Before long, the roads turned into a thick mass of mud, water, and sludge. As the rain intensified, the ground became a deep, sticky mire. Now, even the weary horse could no longer ignore the conditions. It struggled through the mud, barely able to move, until it began to sink—slowly but surely—into the depths of the swamp, pulling the wagon and its passengers along with it into the engulfing quagmire. Seeing that he was

in grave danger, with no apparent way out, and fearing that they would sink even deeper, Rav Zev lifted his eyes to Heaven and cried out with bitter tears:

“Ribbono Shel Olam! My Father in Heaven! I know well that this storm has come upon me because of my many shortcomings. Yet I ask You: is it possible to return to You from within such a state—mired in filth and confusion? In such turmoil and distress, one cannot properly reflect or repent! Therefore, I beg You: first deliver me from this predicament, and then I promise faithfully that when I am brought from distress to relief, I will return to You with all my heart and soul!”

Regarding this, Rav Elazar Azikri zt”l, composed in his stirring prayer:

יְדִיד נָפֶשׁ אֵב הַרְחֵמוּ, מְשׁוֹךְ עַבְדְּךָ אֶל רְצוֹנְךָ, יְרוּץ עַבְדְּךָ כְּמוֹ אֵיל, וְשִׁתְחַוָּה אֶל מֹל הַדָּרָה, יַעֲרֹב לוֹ יְדִידוּתֶיךָ מִנוֹפֶת צוּר וְכָל טַעַם.

“Beloved of the soul, compassionate Father, draw Your servant to Your will; then Your servant will run like a deer, bowing before Your glory; Your love will be sweeter to him than honey and all delights.”

When a person is freed from confusion and inner entanglement, and is drawn close with love, then he runs eagerly toward the Divine, yearning and thirsting with all his being.

What is true of the individual is true of the collective. Klal Yisrael, holy and beloved, are battered and oppressed under the burdens of exile, pursued relentlessly by the evil inclination and its forces, especially in these spiritually dark times.

If only Hakadosh Baruch Hu would lift His people from their distress and draw them near with love, they would surely run after Him with longing—All who pursue her overtake her in the straits.

Thus do Klal Yisrael cry out in these days, as expressed at the close of Eichah: לָמָּה לִנְצַח תִּשְׁכַּחֲנוּ, תַּעֲזָבֵנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יָמִים. – הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ ה' - Why do You forget us forever? Why do You forsake us for so long? Return us to You, O Lord, and we shall return; renew our days as of old.

May it be fulfilled speedily in our days, Amen.

One evening, at a late hour, gentle knocking was heard at the door of Rav Mordechai's home.

Standing outside was “Reb Nachum the Shoemaker,” a simple craftsman of the town.

Rav Mordechai received him warmly, showing him great affection and respect, for he recognized in him a man of sincerity, uprightness, and deep yiras Shamayim.

As Reb Nachum glanced around, he noticed that on the table in front of the Rav lay a simple siddur filled with supplications, from which Rav Mordechai was reciting prayers with deep concentration. This puzzled him greatly—what was a scholar and judge of such stature doing reciting the sort of supplications commonly used by simple folk?

Sensing his surprise, Rav Mordechai explained: “Today, while sitting in judgment, we were occupied with several difficult and complex cases that extended late into the night. Since midnight is approaching, I feared that if I were to go to sleep, I would not wake up in time for Tikkun Chatzos. Therefore, I remained awake, and since I found it difficult to study at this hour, I occupied myself with these supplications.”

Who was this Reb Nachum, and how had he come to know Rav Mordechai? To understand this, we must turn back several years, when Nachum, a devoted Breslav adherent, still lived in the town of Lomaz, near Radzin.

Late one night, Nachum entered the local beis midrash. It was still filled with the sounds of intense Torah discussion, as the town’s talmidei chachamim debated with fiery passion. Nachum quietly made his way to the back of the hall. There, behind the oven, he sat down on the floor, removed his shoes, and began to daven from the small sefer in his hand.

Nachum was the son of the simple, God-fearing, Reb Falik Shtraks from Lomaz, who had sent him in his youth to the city of Berdichev to learn the trade of shoemaking. Upon returning, Nachum established his place in the beis midrash—yet not among the scholars, but in his humble corner.

The learned men noticed that every night at midnight he would appear, sit on the ground, and pray with deep emotion, often with tears streaming down his face. Curious, they approached

him to see what he was doing. To their astonishment, they discovered that this simple shoemaker was reciting Tikkun Chatzos. His reading was full of errors, and he barely understood the words he was saying.

The scholars could not restrain their laughter. In those days, Tikkun Chatzos was practiced only by select individuals deeply versed in mystical teachings. And here was a shoemaker who could hardly read properly attempting to recite it. Some of them approached him mockingly: “Nachum, what business do you have with Tikkun Chatzos? Do you not know that this practice is reserved for those of lofty spiritual attainment, who understand the sorrow of the Shechinah in exile?”

Nachum lifted his tear-filled eyes and answered with simple sincerity: “On the contrary—you are great scholars, constantly engaged in Torah. For you, the lack of a Beis Hamikdash is not felt so strongly. But I am a simple shoemaker, an unlearned man. I feel its loss deeply. That is why I beg the Almighty to rebuild it speedily and bring our redemption.”

Among those present was Rav Mordechai Halberstadt himself, then a brilliant young prodigy and a prominent follower of Radzin. He had not expected such words from a simple shoemaker. Yet he sensed their truth, and something ignited within his heart—the same burning sincerity that filled the heart of Nachum. He approached him and asked: “Where did you learn this custom of rising at midnight for such prayers?”

“In Berdichev,” Nachum replied. “While I was there, I became acquainted with followers of Breslav. They would gather to recite Tikkun Chatzos, and from them I learned this custom.” Thus it was that the young shoemaker, who had gone to learn a trade, merited to absorb a spirit of holiness—awakening each night to mourn the destruction and yearn for redemption.

Nachum’s words penetrated deeply into Rav Mordechai’s heart. He reasoned a fortiori: if a simple shoemaker could attain such closeness to Hashem, pouring out his soul nightly in mourning, how much more so should a scholar be capable of this.

From that time onward, Rabbi Mordechai himself adopted the practice of reciting Tikkun Chatzos every night. Through

this path, he drew close to Rav Avraham Sternhartz and became one of his devoted disciples. He even merited to participate several times in the sacred gathering in Uman on Rosh Hashanah. A single moment of sincerity, even from the simplest individual, can kindle a flame that illuminates the soul of the greatest of scholars.

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Several Talmudei Torah and holy yeshivos have a beautiful custom to recite Tikkun Chatzos together with the students during these days of mourning, with shared emotion and awakening of the heart.

In a talk that I delivered, with Hashem’s help, to young schoolchildren as an introduction to Tikkun Chatzos, I explained in simple terms the pain of the Shechinah.

I described to them the plight of a family that had been cast out of their home into the street, chas veshalom—left without a roof over their heads or a place to rest—or beset by other hardships. How great is the suffering of the children in such a family! And especially how they cry and grieve when they see the anguish of their father and mother, struggling under such distress.

And we, the children of the Omnipresent, have all been exiled and cast about together—Hashem and His Shechinah along with His people—from our home, the Beis Hamikdash. How much pain should we, the children, feel that Hashem and the holy Shechinah have, as it were, been driven from their dwelling! And it has been nearly two thousand years that we have neither home nor inheritance.

Thus I elaborated to them in simple language, according to their level. Immediately upon concluding the talk, it was a deeply moving sight: the pure children approached the recitation of Tikkun Chatzos with awe and love, with great emotion and hearts poured out like water.

We must learn and take instruction from these children, whose simplicity guides them. They are not yet burdened with personal biases, nor filled with ulterior motives and distractions. Consequently, their minds are clearer, and they grasp more readily the simple, pure truth in all its subtlety and force.

It is not without reason that Chazal (Shabbos 119b) extolled the merit of the breath of the speech of schoolchildren, through which the world endures. Their crying over the destruction is not mixed with other worries or troubles—it is a pure and untainted weeping, devoted entirely to Hashem alone.