

Parashas
Va'eschanan

• 745 •

י"א אב תשפ"ו

5786

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

כי תוליד בנים

When you will give birth to children

A certain man went to a doctor because he was not feeling well. The doctor saw what he saw, examined what he examined, and reached the conclusion that a bacterium was circulating in the man's body. He therefore prescribed for him to take a strong antibiotic medication, but at the same time the doctor instructed him to take vitamin pills and probiotics as well. The man was surprised: why did he need the vitamins? The doctor explained to him that since the bacterium was strong and dangerous, he was giving him a very strong antibiotic, but it was so strong that it also affected the body itself and weakened it. Therefore, in order to strengthen the systems of the body, he needed to reinforce it with vitamins.

This Shabbos we read the section that we just read on the bitter day of Tisha B'Av, "כי תוליד בנים" - "When you beget children," (4:25) and the essence of the reading is a warning to Israel that if they will not do the will of the Omnipresent and will rebel against Him, a great calamity will come upon them. And since "a generation in whose days the Bais HaMikdash was not built—it is as though it was destroyed in its days," this reading is fitting to be read on this bitter day. However, since we have already passed "The Three Weeks," and we now stand in "Shabbos Nachamu," let us contemplate these posukim which teach us a wondrous matter: indeed, this portion is meant to warn us, but in practice only a small part—about a quarter of the posukim—are words of rebuke, while all the rest are words of strengthening and encouragement toward repentance—and this is indeed remarkable.

The holy Torah teaches us here what is the proper way to offer rebuke, and the holy Rebbe Nachman of Breslov zyl, defined this well when he said that for every spoonful of rebuke one needs a bucket full of words of encouragement. For words of rebuke and admonition are indeed necessary and must be said, and they are truly like antibiotics that must be administered from time to time. But we must know that more than they can help, they can cause damage if they are not given in the proper measure. Therefore, one must add alongside them many "vitamins" for the soul, which are words of encouragement and strengthening, and they must be many times greater than the words of rebuke. This instruction applies to every person, and especially to parents and educators, upon whom rests the duty to weigh words of rebuke with a scale of gold, and to pour alongside them many "vitamins" of encouragement and strengthening.

Tiv HaTorah – Va'eschanan

קדושת השבת בענוה תליא

The sanctity of Shabbos is dependent on humility

וְזָכַרְתָּ כִּי עֶבֶד הָיִיתָ בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וַיֹּצֵאֲךָ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִשָּׁם בְּיָד חֲזָקָה וּבְזֵרַע נְטוּיָה עַל כֵּן צִוָּךְ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת: (ה, טו)

And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Hashem, your G-d, has taken you out from there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, therefore Hashem, your G-d, has commanded you to make the Shabbos day. (5:15)
Rashi explains: And you shall remember that you were a slave – He redeemed you on this condition, that you should be a slave to Him, and keep His commandments.

Behold, from the wording of the Torah it appears that this fact—that we were slaves in Egypt, and HaKadosh Baruch Hu redeemed us from there—is a proper reason to command us in the mitzvah of Shabbos. For after the command of remembrance it is stated, "therefore Hashem your G-d commanded you... to observe the day of Shabbos," and this is as if to say that specifically the mitzvah of Shabbos is incumbent upon you as a result of this remembrance. However, from the words of Rashi we see that he was not comfortable to explain it in this way, and he explains that through this remembrance we understand that our Creator justly places upon us the yoke of all the mitzvos. And even though his words do not accord with the simple meaning of the posuk, nevertheless it is understood by all that words of truth emerged from his pen, for there is no reason to distinguish between the mitzvah of Shabbos and the other mitzvos of the Torah; and just as this remembrance obligates us in the observance of Shabbos, so too it obligates us in all the other mitzvos.

However, it is a principle that a posuk does not depart from its plain meaning, and since the Torah mentioned this remembrance specifically regarding the mitzvah of Shabbos, it must be that it wished to inform us that there is some connection between this remembrance and the mitzvah of Shabbos.

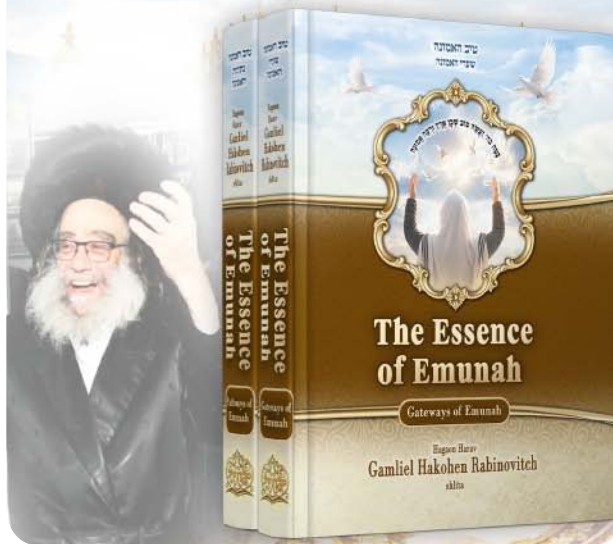
And by way of מוסר it may be said that the Torah wished to reveal to us that the feeling of the holiness of Shabbos depends upon the trait of humility and submission. Therefore, the Torah mentioned the remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt specifically regarding the mitzvah of Shabbos, for this remembrance prepares a person for humility and submission, because it reveals to him that he has no independent ability at all, and that he is like clay in the hands of the potter. As reality has proven, for in the past he was a lowly slave, like an animal dependent upon the will of its master, and he had no ability whatsoever to free his soul from confinement. Only after it arose in the will of HaKadosh Baruch Hu to extract him from distress did he merit this. And this reality has not changed in the present, nor will it change in the future, for HaKadosh Baruch Hu is the Master of all—past, present, and future. And when a person recognizes this, he becomes entirely filled with humility and submission and is thereby fitting for the holiness of Shabbos.

The Essence of Emunah A Transformative Two-Volume Set

In this profound work, Rav Gamliel Rabinovitch, shlit'a, guides the reader with clarity and depth, revealing emunah as a living, sustaining force at the very core of every Jew's life.

Drawing on the wisdom of Chazal, Rishonim, and the great masters of Torah, this sefer illuminates how emunah is built, deepened, and lived - bringing clarity in times of confusion, strength in moments of challenge, and a steady sense of purpose in all circumstances.

With warmth and practical insight, *Shaarei Haemunah* and *Nesivos Haemunah* together reveal the "Essence of Emunah", showing how a life grounded in true faith becomes one of calm, resilience, and genuine closeness to Hashem.



And indeed, it is brought from the Arizal (see Pri Etz Chaim, Sha'ar HaShabbos, chapter 88) that on the holy Shabbos Moshe and a thousand souls come to restore to Israel their crown from Har Chorev. From here you see that the light of Shabbos depends upon the trait of Moshe, which is humility. Therefore, Moshe merited from then the crown from Har Chorev, which is the aspect of the light of Shabbos, since he was the most humble of all men upon the face of the earth, and he draws down this light to each and every one of Israel according to the measure of humility implanted within him.

Accordingly, it will be well understood, according to our words, why this remembrance was stated after the Torah had already explained in the preceding posukim (posukim 12–14) the essence of the mitzvah of Shabbos. For you may ask: if this remembrance is the reason for the mitzvah of Shabbos, it should have preceded it, for the Torah speaks in the language of human beings, and it is the way of human beings that if one seeks recompense from someone to whom he has done good, he first mentions the good and afterward requests recompense. Why, then, did the Torah do the opposite and mention the good only after it had already requested the obligation?

However, according to our words, it may be said that this remembrance was not stated only as the reason for the obligation of the act, for if so, it would be a reason not only for the mitzvah of

Shabbos but for all the mitzvos, as Rashi explains. Rather, it is necessary to say that the Torah also wished to allude to what a person should do in order to merit to feel the holiness of Shabbos. And since this is not dependent on the essential obligation of the mitzvah of Shabbos, the Torah first presented the details of the obligation that are inherently incumbent upon a person, and only afterward revealed to us that the mitzvah of Shabbos was given to us in order to benefit us, for the holiness of Shabbos is a spiritual delight, and HaKadosh Baruch

Hu desired to give delight to Israel through it. However, since this delight depends upon humility, the Torah advises us to remember our past—how He took us out from the land of Egypt and were it not for this we would still be in Egypt. And since through this we can prepare ourselves to feel the holiness of Shabbos, “therefore Hashem your G-d commanded you to observe the day of Shabbos,” knowing that you possess the means to attain its holiness and to delight in its goodness.

Furthermore, the very observance of Shabbos can bring a person to submission and humility, for the cessation on Shabbos comes to testify that everything depends upon Heaven. He is the One who created all the worlds and completed the work in the six days of creation, and just as in the past, so too in the present, He is the One who conducts the world, and He is the Cause of all causes and the Reason of all reasons. And in order to instill this faith, we cease from

our own actions, thereby revealing that our success is not dependent on the work of our hands, but only on the blessing of Hashem. And even during the six days of action, He is the One who activates our hands when it is His will to bring about our livelihood through them.

This understanding indeed arouses a person to humility and submission, since he knows that everything depends only on the power of the Creator, and without the Creator a person has no power or ability at all.

‘בזכות אהבת חינו’

‘In the merit of unconditional love’

Moreinu HaRav shlit”a relates:

I was in Meron, and a certain man wanted to honor me with the mitzvah of shiluach haken [sending away the mother bird] I was happy about the offer, but since there were other people there who had not yet merited to perform this mitzvah, I yielded so that another person would have the merit.

He tried to insist that I should do it, but I explained to him that I too desired to perform the mitzvah again, but I felt that HaKadosh Baruch Hu would be happier if I gave it to another person, and if HaKadosh Baruch Hu wishes, He will arrange it for me again.

We returned home from Meron, and right near the house a bird’s nest was right before us!!!

From yielding, one never loses!!!

If we are dealing with matters of hashgacha, I will tell further instances of hashgacha that I experienced in Meron: every time I arrive in Meron there is a man from Tzfat who asks if I have parasha sheets for him to distribute in shuls in Tzfat. Thus, usually we meet, and he merits this important mitzvah.

For Mincha on Friday afternoon, I took a large bundle of parasha sheets to

the grave site of Rebbe Shimon bar Yochai in order to give them to that man so that he would distribute them in Tzfat. I hoped that he would appear, and I calculated that if he would not arrive, I would leave the parasha sheets at the holy site and people would benefit from them.

From Heaven it was arranged that he arrived and davened in exactly the same minyan in which I davened Mincha. He took the parasha sheets with joy and distributed them in Tzfat.

Another instance of hashgacha: after Tefillas Ma’ariv of Shabbos Kodesh, I began to walk back toward the lodging. I had a bundle full of seforim that I had taken to the grave site to learn from before Shabbos, and now I had to carry the seforim back to the apartment.

A young and strong man asked to speak with me on the way to the apartment, and on his own initiative he offered and took the seforim from my hand all the way to the apartment.

He carried it like a bag of feathers, and for me it was truly a rescue!!!

This is the principle: one who seeks HaKadosh Baruch Hu in individual hashgacha pratis will always find Him in every step of his life!!!

טיב ההשגחה

In the holy sefer Be'er Mayim Chayim zt"l (end of the parashah), these pesukim are expounded to reveal the profound secret of mitigating judgments at their very root.

He builds upon the teaching of the Arizal zt"l (Pri Etz Chayim, Shaar Tikkun Chatzos, ch. 3), regarding the pasuk in Eichah (5:1), זָכֹר ה' מֵעַתָּה הָיָה לָנוּ - Remember, Hashem, what has befallen us. The expression מֵעַתָּה alludes to the Divine Name of mercy (whose numerical value is 45), while זָכֹר alludes to the attribute of justice, corresponding to Elokim. Thus, in exile, the Name of mercy has become incorporated within justice—justice has prevailed over compassion.

Following this path, the Be'er Mayim Chayim explains the statement of Chazal (Bereishis Rabbah 9:11) on the pasuk (Bereishis 1:31), וַיֵּרָא טוֹב מְאֹד - and behold, it was very good. [The word] טוֹב refers to the attribute of goodness; מְאֹד refers to the attribute of affliction."

The meaning is that when justice itself is sweetened and transformed into mercy, it becomes טוֹב מְאֹד - very good—greater even than simple goodness. Pure goodness alone lacks the strength to confront and overcome adversity. It bestows kindness, but cannot wage battle or exact justice against enemies.

By contrast, when justice itself is transformed into mercy, it yields a powerful טוֹב מְאֹד—a goodness imbued with strength. Such goodness not only bestows kindness, but also protects, defends, and overcomes all adversaries.

For example, let's say a person has merited great wealth through an abundance of pure "good" (טוֹב). If bandits come to rob him, that "good" alone—chesed shebe'chesed—lacks the capacity to punish the thieves or to strike them with firm and decisive blows, as in the plagues of Pharaoh and the like. For "good" by itself is only good, and good does not inflict harm.

Not so when justice itself is sweetened and transformed into mercy—this is "very good" (טוֹב מְאֹד): a good that includes strength and force—gevurah shebe'chesed. Such a quality has the power to guard a person from every distress, to save him from every enemy, sword, and bandit, and to execute vengeance upon nations and rebuke upon peoples. Therefore, it is termed "very good."

Now let us expound our pesukim: וַיֵּצִינוּ ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל הַחֲקִים הָאֵלֶּה, לִירְאָה אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ - And Hashem commanded us... to fear Hashem

טיב והמעשיות

"From "Good" to "Very Good"

וַיֵּצִינוּ ה' לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל הַחֲקִים הָאֵלֶּה לִירְאָה אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְטוֹב לָנוּ כָּל הַיָּמִים לְחַיֵּינוּ בְּהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה. וַיְצַדֵּק הַתְּהִי לָנוּ כִּי נִשְׁמָר לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּאִשֶּׁר צִוָּנוּ

Hashem commanded us to perform all these statutes, to fear Hashem our God, for our good all the days, to give us life as this day. And it shall be righteousness for us, if we observe to perform this entire commandment before Hashem our God, as He commanded us (6:24–25).

our God—for our good all the days. Through [the attribute of] יִרְאָה—refraining from prohibition out of awe of Hashem, and cleaving to Him through permitted avenues—one achieves the basic level of sweetening לָנוּ כָּל הַיָּמִים - for our good, following the Arizal above, that justice is sweetened and transformed into what is לָנוּ, only for our good.

However, the pasuk continues: וַיְצַדֵּק הַתְּהִי לָנוּ - And it shall be righteousness for us...—indicating an even higher level. Not merely that judgment is neutralized, but that it is transformed into טוֹב מְאֹד—a goodness of greater potency and elevation.

Concerning this, the pasuk explains in clear and generous language how one may attain this great merit of tzedakah—the sweetening of judgments at their very source: through לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת כָּל הַחֲקִים הָאֵלֶּה, לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ - for we shall observe to perform this entire mitzvah before Hashem our God. That is to say: for a basic sweetening of judgments, in the aspect of mere "good" (tov), the attribute of fear alone suffices—as it is written, to fear Hashem—for our good. Through this, the Accuser has no standing to prosecute, nor any hold over us, since we are careful, out of awe, not to transgress the word of Hashem in even the slightest matter.

However, to sweeten the judgments at their root—so that they are transformed into "very good" (טוֹב מְאֹד)—this requires that one fulfill the entire mitzvah specifically before Hashem our God: with a mode of service rooted in love interwoven with both chesed and gevurah together. That is, to serve Him with strength and inner might.

This [continues the Be'er Mayim Chayim] is realized when one performs the mitzvos "with an intense and wondrous love, with

alacrity—such that neither rain nor snow, neither the body nor wealth, nor home nor spouse, will restrain or hold him back. And everything he possesses, within and without, will not hinder him from the service of his Creator. For all these loves are as nothing and naught in his eyes in comparison to the love of his Creator—to bring Him pleasure through His mitzvos, burning within him like a blazing fire, with flashes of flame, a flame of Hashem. To merit to serve this great and awesome King, to do as He has commanded, with love, joy, and a spirit of contentment."

This, then, is the profound difference between a love that stems solely from chesed, and a love that is richly interwoven with holy gevuros—drawn from the aspect of strict justice that has now been sweetened at its root. For all the fiery zeal, the intensity, and the powerful love that burns like fire in a state of utter devotion—all of it stems from the force of gevurah integrated within chesed before Hashem Elokeinu.

Correspondingly, as we transform these gevuros into a love of Hashem with strength and might, so too are the supernal gevuros and sacred judgments transformed for us into "very good" (טוֹב מְאֹד)—into abundant kindness—with a mighty and powerful outpouring, "for they rise in correspondence to the Seraphim, the holy fiery angels, emerging with burning vitality from the souls of Yisrael to revere Him in holiness."

Through this, it shall be righteousness for us, for we shall observe to perform this entire mitzvah before Hashem our God—specifically through a service of love blended from chesed and gevurah, serving Him, blessed be He, with strength and might, in fiery passion like a flame of Hashem.

Then there is effected the sweetening of judgments at their root, and "Hashem our God will protect us, guarding us from every distress—from the hand of every enemy, from sword, famine, pestilence, and captivity, and He will bestow upon us all manner of goodness, blessings, salvations, and life—abundance and peace with great power and might—through His love and compassion for His people Yisrael, as stated."

Thus concludes his holy and fiery teaching, ablaze with sparks of sacred fire.

Top of Form

Bottom of Form

Maran, the Gaavad, the gaon and tzaddik Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld zt”l, once walked through the alleys of the Old City of Yerushalayim during a time of tension, when hostile elements frequently harassed the Jewish residents. Suddenly, a young Arab approached and, in anger, hurled an orange directly at the Rav’s head. The attendant accompanying him was shocked and outraged at such brazenness. Yet, to his astonishment, the Rav responded with joy, exclaiming: “Baruch Hashem! Baruch Hashem!”

Perplexed, the attendant asked for an explanation. The Rav replied: “A person must always thank Hashem and seek the hidden good within every situation—this itself is a powerful means of sweetening judgments.

“Here too,” he said, “we must give thanks. Baruch Hashem—it was only an orange, not a rock. Had it been a rock, it could have caused grave injury. Instead, we were spared with mere embarrassment.”

He then explained the pasuk (Tehillim 16:8), לִגְדִי תָמִיד - I set Hashem before me constantly. Even when circumstances appear לִגְדִי [which can also be translated as] against me—filled with strict justice—one must still reveal the attribute of mercy within the situation.

Through this, one merits that Hashem is before me constantly—that mercy and kindness accompany him at all times, in every situation, through the secret of sweetening judgments at their source.

A measure of insight into the inner workings of mitigating judgments at their root, and the manner in which it operates for good, may be drawn from the wondrous episode recorded in the Gemara (Ta’anis 21a) concerning the saintly Tanna, Nachum Ish Gam Zu. His very name testifies to this remarkable trait—the ability to transform every circumstance for the good.

As the Gemara relates: Why was he called Ish Gam Zu? Because whatever befell him, he would proclaim, “Gam zu l’tovah—this too is for the good.” Every occurrence in his life, whether seemingly favorable or otherwise, was met with this unwavering declaration.

[According to Rabbeinu Chananel Gamzu is the name of a place, as in the pasuk (Divrei Hayamim II 28:18), וַיִּלְכְּדוּ אֶת בֵּית - נִשְׁמָשׁ וְכו' - וְאֵת גִּמְזוֹ וְאֵת בְּנֵיהֶּ - and they captured... and Gimzo and its towns.

Others explain that while Nachum was called after his place of residence, he was nicknamed, Ish Gam Zu—“this too”—on account of his conduct.]

Before examining this well-known narrative, it must be emphasized, self-evidently, that we possess no true grasp of the exalted stature of the Tanna'im, who were a chariot for the Shechinah. Our aim is only to learn what is revealed in the Gemara, for it is Torah, and we are obligated to study it.

With this in mind, we turn to the substance of this extraordinary account. At its core, the principle of “gam zu l’tovah” reflects a simple and complete faith: that every event, without exception, is for the good. In this, Nachum Ish Gam Zu stood supreme in the realm of pure faith.

Once, the Jews of Eretz Yisrael sought to send a fitting tribute to the emperor to appease him. The sages deliberated: who should be entrusted with this mission? They concluded that Nachum Ish Gam Zu, who was accustomed to miracles, was most suitable. They sent with him a chest filled with precious stones and pearls.

While on his journey, he lodged overnight at an inn. During the night, the innkeepers secretly emptied the chest of its treasures, replaced them with earth from their courtyard, and returned it unnoticed.

Upon arriving at the royal palace, Nachum presented the chest before the emperor. When it was opened, and it was found to contain only dust and dirt, the emperor was enraged and considered issuing a decree of destruction against the Jews.

Yet Nachum remained composed and declared, as always: “Gam zu l’tovah.”

At that moment, Eliyahu Ha’navi appeared, disguised as one of the ministers, and suggested that perhaps this is not ordinary earth, but the very soil of Avraham Avinu, which miraculously turned into weapons in battle, as it is written (Yeshayah 41:2), - יִתֵּן כְּעֶפֶר הָרִבּוֹ, כִּקְשׁ נִדָּף קִשְׁתּוֹ He makes his sword like dust, his bow like driven straw.

The emperor tested the soil in battle against an unconquerable province—and indeed, it brought about victory. Overjoyed, he rewarded Nachum richly, filling his chest with precious jewels, and sent him home with great honor.

On his return journey, Nachum again lodged at the same inn. Seeing the honor he received, the innkeepers inquired what he had brought to the emperor. Nachum

replied simply: “What I took from here, I brought there.”

They concluded that the soil of their property must possess miraculous powers. They demolished their house, gathered the earth, and brought it to the emperor. But upon testing, it proved worthless—and they were executed.

The ethical lesson drawn from this remarkable account is the immense power of simple, unadulterated faith—that everything is truly for the good. Through this, Nachum Ish Gam Zu effected the mitigating of judgments at their very source.

One who believes wholeheartedly in Hashem, and even in times of distress affirms “this too is for the good,” merits a corresponding response: Hashem reveals the hidden good that was concealed within the attribute of justice. The latent kindness emerges, and salvation may come—even beyond the natural order.

This idea is articulated in Tanya (Iggeres Ha’kodesh, 11), in a well-known discourse (Lehaskilcha Binah): “A person must rejoice and live with faith that Hashem gives him life and goodness at every moment. One who complains demonstrates a deficiency in this belief... and therefore the sages of truth greatly distanced themselves from sadness.”

Through such faith, the perceived evil is truly elevated and transformed into revealed good.

Nevertheless, an important qualification must be made. When confronted with the suffering of others—or communal distress—one must not dismiss it by saying, “This too is for the good.” Rather, one must pray fervently for the annulment of harsh decrees.

As related in Shivchei Ha’Besht: when a harsh conscription decree was issued, the Baal Shem Tov instructed his disciple, Rav Nachman of Horodenka zt”l, to pray for its annulment. Rav Nachman responded with his usual refrain: “Gam zu l’tovah.”

The Baal Shem Tov replied: “It is fortunate you did not live in the time of Haman—for you would have said the same then as well...”

Similarly, the holy Rebbe of Modzhitz explains the pasuk (Shemos 13:17), - וְלֹא נָחֵם אֱלֹקִים - And Hashem did not lead them..., that in times of strict justice one must not rely solely on this attribute, but must actively pray and supplicate for the mitigating and nullification of decrees.

Thus, the teaching emerges in its full clarity: Faith in “gam zu l’tovah” has the power to mitigate judgments at their root—but it must be coupled with earnest prayer. Through both together, one merits to witness salvations and wonders at all times, Amen.

...