

PARSHAS BEHAR - BECHUKOSAI



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HOW DO I ACQUIRE BITACHON?



Parshas Behar is the *parshah* of *bitachon*. The *yesodos* of *bitachon* are in this *parshah*. One of the great mitzvos that Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave us to build our *bitachon* in Him is the mitzvah of *shemittah*. Even if we are in *chutz la'aretz*, or in Eretz Yisrael and we're not farmers who are leaving our land fallow, the lessons of *shemittah* are still here for us to learn.

This *parshah* also talks about a situation where a person owns a field in Eretz Yisrael and falls into hard times (Vayikra 25:25-28).¹ He must raise money because of his poverty, so he sells his field or part of his field and then waits to see if some relative comes and says, "I would like to redeem the field from the fellow who bought it from you." It's called *geulas hasadeh*, "redemption of the field" from the hand of the buyer, and he then puts it back into the hand of the seller, whose plot this was initially. Then the Torah says ואיש כי לא יהיה לו גואל, and a person who doesn't have a redeemer, והשיגה ידו, and instead he himself came into money and is able to redeem the field from the fellow who bought it, so then he redeems it וחשב את שני ממכרו - and the Torah goes on to tell us how to figure out the amount he has to pay to redeem it.

Rashi asks: וכי יש לך אדם בישראל שאין לו גואל, everybody's got some relatives. How is it possible that a person doesn't have some Jewish relative? Rather, it means he doesn't have a relative who is in the financial position, שיוכל לגאול ממכרו, who's able to redeem the field from the fellow he sold it to.

The question on this *passuk* is, what's the message of the *passuk*? What's the *din* that this *passuk* teaches us? There are two ways you can redeem a field. One is that a *karov* could redeem your field. That's the first *passuk*. The second *passuk* says there is a *geulas atzmo*. You have your own ability to redeem it after you sell it. So why does the *passuk* find it necessary to write ואיש כי לא יהיה לו גואל and that then he attained the money himself? For what purpose would the Torah have to give us this introduction? *Lechorah* this is not instructive in the actual *din*. The *din* that it's stating in this *passuk* is that if a seller obtains money, he may redeem the field himself, whether he has relatives, doesn't have relatives, or he doesn't want to ask them. Who cares about that? Why in the world would the Torah introduce this *din* by saying ואיש כי לא יהיה לו גואל? The first *passuk* is talking about the case where the fellow can't afford it, so a relative is the only one who has an option to do it, and if he has the money to do it, he does it. What's the Torah telling us here?

WHEN WE FEEL NO ONE BUT HASHEM CAN HELP

My Rebbi (Rav Meir Halevi Soloveichik) said over something many times in the name of his grandfather, the Netziv, Rav Hirsch Leib, as they refer to him. He said that the Torah is telling us a tremendous message and a foundation of when and how you apply *bitachon*. The *passuk* is talking about a fellow who does not have a relative who's financially capable of coming forward and redeeming the field. But then he himself obtains the money. The *passuk* is saying that when a person does not have someone who is capable of helping him out, that is a reason that he himself will acquire the money! Because when a person doesn't have whom to rely on, he automatically puts his *bitachon* in Hashem. That's *gufa* the reason that he acquired the money. If a person has relatives he could rely on, so sometimes those relatives will assist him. But what if a guy doesn't have any relatives to help him out? What is the natural reaction of a person in such a situation? What would he feel? He feels he's lost. People feel, "I'm lost. I'm helpless." The Torah teaches us, says the Netziv, that this situation has to become a platform for you to get the money directly from Hashem, to be *zocheh* והשיגה ידו. If you feel *meyuash*, you feel despair, and you give up hope and you say, "I don't have any relatives, I'm a *nebach*," then you will remain a *nebach*. But if you say, "I don't have any relatives, but I'm not a *nebach* because I have upon whom to rely on," then Hashem helps you out.

In the Rebbi's language, he said the *middah* of *bitachon* is when a person comes to the awareness *az ir hut nit ken andere eitzah nor der Aibeshter* - he has no other *eitzah* what to do; only the *Aibeshter*. Then that *zechus*, that *bitachon*, becomes his merit for him to attain what he desires. But you first have to come clearly to the *hakarah* (realization) that there's no other *eitzah*. And that is what the *passuk* says - ואיש כי לא יהיה לו גואל - when a person comes to the clear *hakarah*, he accepts the fact I have no one upon whom to rely, then וחשיגה ידו, that itself is going to be the key to the *hasagas yado*.

But the nature of people is to do the opposite. I can't tell you how often I hear, "My wife's parents will help me." "My wife's grandparents will help me." Or "My parents could help me, but they said enough is enough and they won't help me anymore." Or, "I have a rich uncle who is giving money to the family, but I'm not sure where he's holding nowadays," and you're holding out that hope for the rich uncle. A person has to know that this is a training you have to burn into your system. Now, if your parents will help you there's nothing wrong with relying on and being *boteach* on your parents. If they are willing to help you, there's nothing wrong with relying on them, but you must understand that Hashem is giving you the money! It's solely from Hashem, and your parents are just the *shluchim bealma*. If you trust in your parents, you bring upon yourself a *klalah*. You will make your parents lose the money and not enable them to help you. You have to say, "*Baruch Hashem* that Hashem provides for me through my relatives, my parents, my uncle, my friend, my wife, but it's completely from Hashem." But if a person doesn't have help from relatives, and he tells himself, "I'm not so lucky. I'm stuck" - that's a mistake. He has to say to himself, "I have no other hope, so I need to place my trust in Hashem." You have Hashem! And if you do that, this will be the key to your salvation.

¹ כי: מוכר אחיך ומכר מאחזתו ובא גאלו הקרב אליו וגאל את ממכר אחיו. ואיש כי לא יהיה לו גאל והשיגה ידו ומצא כדי גאלתו. וחשב את שני ממכרו והשיב את העדף לאיש אשר מכר לו ושבת לאחזתו.

My Rebbi *shtell tzu* how we say in the *piyut* אדון המושיע, the Master who brings salvation, בלתך אין להושיע, without You there is no salvation.² גואל ומושיע, He is the redeemer.³ He will be *moshia*. My Rebbi interpreted this in light of what the Netziv says, that when a person comes to the *hakarah* that להושיע אין בלתך, that he has no one on whom to be *boteach*, then Hakadosh Baruch Hu will be the גואל ומושיע. If you understand there's only one *adon*, one Master who's *moshia* and without Hashem, בלתך אין להושיע, then you'll be *zocheh* to see the גואל ומושיע.

DON'T PANIC - TRUST IN HASHEM

Now this can be applied practically in our everyday life. It's not just a cute *vort*. What I find amazing is that when people face this situation, *kemat* everybody that I meet goes nuts, to some degree or another. "We're lost." I see wives going nuts. "My husband's not going to bring home the dollars. How are we going to pay for the bar mitzvah?" In Eretz Yisrael, I've heard: "Who's paying for the bris? Who is paying for the tefillin?" Do you know what the answer is? The same One who paid for everything else. When a wife believes in her husband - and there are many wives who are *boteach* in their husbands - you know what happens? Their husbands can't find work. Their husbands can't find a job. Because they're *boteach* in their husbands. They're not *boteach* in Hashem. Here's a wife who tells her husband, "Okay, it's time to produce, and these are the numbers that we need to meet." I think to myself, are you cuckoo? How could you dictate what you need to meet? The only one who determines the numbers is Hashem! The wife tells me, "My husband is very talented. My husband is extremely schooled. He has a degree. It should be no problem to make that kind of money." She has pure *bitachon* in her husband's hands. What happens is, she's *zocheh* to an *arur*. She was *boteach* in her husband, and she's not going to see any *parnasah*.

Now, if she would say, "My dear husband, I think maybe Hashem wants you to go to work, and I would like you to try to go to work. Maybe Hashem will give us *parnasah* that way. If He doesn't provide you another way, maybe He'll give you that way. Just trust Hashem."

I see it so many times. Here's a worrying couple, as many couples are. A bar mitzvah is coming up, and they have to make it in a hall because every child in the class has a bar mitzvah in the hall, and my child said he wants it. I asked him, "This is what the kid wants?" The kid would like to have it. He'll feel bad if he doesn't have it. So I said, "If that's the case, you need financial help." "How should we go about getting the money?" I said, "I'll tell you how. By putting your *bitachon* in Hashem." They called me once, they called me twice. Later they came to see me, and *chazered* over the *shiur* a few more times. I told them, "I'm telling you it's going to come." "Well, we need a few thousand dollars. That's not a small change. We have to pay for the tefillin." I said, "Do you think that when Hashem gave you the child, He didn't know he was going to be a boy? You think he didn't know that he was going to need tefillin?"

Most people don't believe in Hashem. At all. Whatsoever. You must be *mechazek* yourself and tell yourself, "I have no other way." I said to the boy's mother, "Even if your husband wanted to go to work, could he go to work now and make enough money to pay for the bar mitzvah?" So it's בלתך אין להושיע. If your parents tell you we can't help you anymore, it's בלתך אין להושיע. I love when guys tell me, "I'll get a job. I'll get a job on the side." You've got to trust Hashem.

ON FINDING A DIRAH

Now, the first time my Rebbi was *mechanech* me in this lesson was before I actually sat in his *shiur*. I had come to Eretz Yisrael, and I was looking for a *dirah*. I asked people who were already there "How do you find a *dirah*?" They said, "By word of mouth. You put up signs or you look in the *shuls* in this area, and you'll find people who have beds or rooms to rent. So I put up a sign. Nothing came about. I said, "What's going to be?" "Ah, don't worry about it. You'll find. No problem." I was the kind of fellow who liked to have things tidied up. I liked them to be settled. I didn't want to find the *dirah* the day before the *zman*. But it wasn't happening, and I was getting a little nervous. I was going to the *shuls* a couple times a day, looking. Maybe there are new signs. I couldn't find anything.

I also wanted to have a *dirah* close to where my Rebbi lived. The guys told me to forget about that. There are no *diros* where he lives. There are none available. There's none in that area for rent. People are there for years where he lives. There are no rentals over there. Only in the old section in Geulah where you find these rundown dumps that people don't want to fix, and the way they make quick money is they rent them to *bachurim* who pay top dollar. The *bachurim* don't care how it looks. They have no demands.

I saw the *matzav* was going nowhere, so I decided maybe I'll go ask my Rebbi what to do. So I went to my Rebbi. I told him, "Ich hob a problem." "Vus?" I told him, "I have no *dirah*." "So what did you try?" I told him everything I tried. I thought he would be impressed that I'd tried everything that could have been done. I asked every *bachur* I met, "Do you know of a *dirah*, any availability?" *Gornisht*. My Rebbi told me, "Give up hope. Stop trying to find a *dirah*. You did all you can do. There's no more you can do now. Now put it on Hashem. You have no other *eitzah*." So I said to him, "How is it going to come?" He said, "Hashem will send it." And I'm thinking to myself: *Oh, but how? Through the window? Or it's going to fall on my head? How is He going to send it? UPS?* They didn't have UPS in Eretz Yisrael in those days. How am I going to get it? But I didn't ask anything. I just said, "That's a little funny." But I walked out and I said, "Listen, this is my *rebbe*. I'm going to try to accept his advice." So I walked out. I said, "Hashem I have no *eitzah*. I give up." Then I went on my happy, merry way.

A couple of hours later, I bump into somebody. "Are you still looking for an apartment? There's a new apartment that just opened up. It's a little out of the way. It's not right next to Brisk." I said, "Where is it exactly?" He said, "It's on a street called Rechov Bnei Brisk." I said, "Where is that street exactly?" He said, "It's up there by the taxis." I said, "What taxis?" I didn't know Eretz Yisrael. It turned out it was the closest *dirah* I could get to my Rebbi's house. It was a *dirah* that was a brand-new *dirah*. It was owned by a *rosh yeshivah* of Yeshivas Kol Torah. He lived across the street. He and his wife had bought this *dirah*. They fixed it up. They made it *mamash* new. They offered it for rent. They were waiting for their children to get married, and meanwhile, they rented it out to people. I got in on that *dirah*. That *dirah* was a prize. First floor. It was a modern apartment. You don't see modern

² אדון המושיע בלתך אין להושיע (סידור אשכנז, הושענות, הושענא רבה)
³ נשמת כל חי, וכו'. מן העולם ועד העולם אתה קל. ומבלעדיך אין לנו מלך גואל ומושיע, וכו'. (סידור אשכנז, שבת שחרית, פסוקי דזמרה)

apartments in Eretz Yisrael. It was for a young couple moving in, you understand? And they even offered a little sweetener. The *rebbetzin* said that she was going to include laundry service for shirts. You put your shirts in the bag and leave it next to your bed. She would come pick them up, do the laundry service, and put them back on your bed, folded. Not on hangers. Folded! And I'm thinking: *Wow, this is unbelievable!*

I moved into that apartment, and I never forgot how I got it. I said what's the *pshat*? The *pshat* is: I put my faith in Hashem, and Hashem said: "I'm going to make this *rosh yeshivah* decide to rent this apartment." He wasn't sure if he wanted to rent it out to *bachurim* or not. He wanted it to be maintained. One of the downsides was that every day, the *rebbetzin* would come into the apartment and leave you notes on your bed, also. If she saw a bottle on the floor or a can or a piece of paper, she would put up signs with notes, *בא להרים את האשפה*, please take out the trash. Try to make your beds. She wanted you to maintain it like it's a *mentsche* place.

I can't tell you how many times since then I've employed the *eitzah*. When I got married, I decided I wanted to go on a honeymoon to Eretz Yisrael. I don't mean literally. I wanted to go to Eretz Yisrael on vacation. To go in those days cost us two grand, which is a big expense. I didn't have any *eitzos*, so I decided I would try to employ this *eitzah*. I said to the Ribono Shel Olam, "I would like to go to Eretz Yisrael with my wife for the summer. Could You please help us? I don't want to spend that money I have in the bank." I told Him, "I'm not relying on that, Hashem. That's not an *eitzah*. Hashem, could I rely on You?" Then my wife was in her friend's house, somebody who lived in Beechwood, a very nice man, and her friend was talking about going to Eretz Yisrael. So my wife said, "That would be nice to go away to Eretz Yisrael. We would also like to go to Eretz Yisrael." The man opened his mouth and said, "I'll tell you what. I'm going to give you the money to go to Eretz Yisrael, for you and your husband. You pay me back ten dollars a week. Is that doable?" She said, "I'll ask my husband. I'll find out." Ten dollars a week was doable, and we paid the guy back. We had a great time. I realized it was a gift from Hashem. An absolute gift. Most people can afford ten dollars. You don't feel ten dollars even on a *kollel* salary. My wife also worked a little bit in teaching.

You can do anything, but as long as you think you have your *eitzah*, it's not going to work. If you think you can go to Eretz Yisrael with 'miles', maybe you can. I can't tell you. Maybe that's the *eitzah*. For you, that's the *eitzah*. I don't say that people who can't afford it shouldn't take money out of their pocket and go do it. But when you come to an awareness that you have no *eitzah*, and you put your trust in Hashem, Hashem will help you out.

I just had a *bachur* now. He went to Eretz Yisrael to learn. There were many boys in the yeshivah who didn't find apartments, and the *zman* was coming up quickly. The guy was going nuts looking for an apartment. He wanted to get settled. Then he remembered this story that I had. He decided to see if it works. So he gave up hope and said, "Hashem, I'm putting it in Your hands." Within a couple of hours, an apartment became available in an amazing way, right across the street from his *rosh yeshivah*, not far from the yeshivah.

People don't realize that if you trust in Hashem, it'll come; but as long as you are thinking of *eitzos*, you are depending on your *eitzos* and this will push off the *yeshua*.

The Rebbe used to say over an interesting *vort* from the Beis Halevi. When people find themselves in a position where they need *parnasah* or they need something and they don't have an option of what to be *meshtadel*, what happens? What do most people do in that case? They fall. They collapse. They think: *I'm lost*. Then they go to the *chachamim*, the Chelmer wise men, and they ask them what to do. Well, maybe you should have thought of getting a degree? Or maybe now you should get a degree? Well, how am I going to eat until I get my degree? If I have to wait for my degree to start eating, I'm going to die by that time. How am I going to live until then? Well, maybe you can go to night school. Maybe you can flip burgers. They come up with these genius ideas.

The problem is the guy thinks he must have an *eitzah* because no one gets money just like that from Hashem. You've got to work. I can't tell you how many fathers called me over the years. "What do you feed my kid this garbage for? You're putting these fantasies into my kid's head. Tell my child the truth. Money doesn't come through the windows." I said, "Oh, it doesn't?" "It comes through the doors." What difference does it make if it comes through windows or through the doors? "I'm training my son to be responsible. *Tachlis*." *Tachlis!* People just can't get it into their heads.

WHEN ARE WE FREE FROM DOING HISHTADLUS?

Zugt the Beis Halevi *mavhil al ha'arayondike zach*.⁴ He says להשיג צרכיו בו להשיג צרכיו, when you have no way of doing *hishtadlus* to acquire what you need, אל יפול לבו מזה, don't feel bad. You should feel happy. You know what you should feel happy about? Because ונפטר מהחוב הלו, once the doors of *hishtadlus* are shut for this fellow, this guy is exempt from the obligation of *hishtadlus*. He doesn't have to make *hishtadlus* anymore! That's a message from Hashem that *hishtadlus* is not necessary for you. *Hishtadlus* is not necessary for you. You hear that?! It's a message from Hashem: "Trust Me." As long as a person has options, and there's a normal *hishtadlus* he can do, there's nothing wrong with being *meshtadel*. You're a lazy bum, and you don't want to be *meshtadel* - don't be a lazy bum. Let him get a job. Let him work a little bit. But if Hashem doesn't give you the option of *hishtadlus*, you know what Hashem is telling you? "You don't need to be *meshtadel*. I'm going to take care of you and provide for you without you being *meshtadel*." The problem is, the guy goes crazy. "I have to be *meshtadel*!" He goes nuts coming up with all kinds of *eitzos* and advice and all kinds of plans, and what happens? It doesn't work. So he doesn't have the *bitachon* in Hashem. He feels down because he doesn't have the option. Instead, he should be saying, "Hashem, I tried everything. *Ich hob nisht ken andere eitzah*."

But you know what happens? I love when people tell me this, "Listen, I don't have time for this *bitachon* thing. How long is it going to take me to get the *bitachon* thing? I need to pay my bills this month." I remember I had a guy who was moving out of his

⁴ וע"כ כשאין להאדם שום סיבה להשתדל בו להשיג צרכיו אל יפול לבו מזה כי אחרי שכבר ננעלו לו שער השתדלות המוטל עליו שוב נפטר מהחוב הלו ויש לו לבטוח בה'. כי אפי' אם חלילה הצרה קרובה ואין האדם יודע שום עצה היאך להנצל ממנה, מ"מ דרכי ה' נעלמים המה מעיני האדם ותשועת ה' כהרף עין, וכמאה"כ (איוב יג, טו) הן קטלני לו אייחל, ובברכות (י.) דרשו ע"ז הפסוק אפי' חרב חדה מונחת לו על צוארו אל ימנע עצמו מן הרחמים, וכמאה"כ (שמואל א' ב, ו) ה' ממית ומחיה מוריד שאול ויעל כי גם מירכתי שאול הוא מעלה, ויזכור האדם מעשה יונה הנביא. וכן אם קמו עליו שונאים להזיקו כתיב (משלי טז, ז) בראות ה' דרכי איש גם אויביו ישלים אתו, ובשונאים עמלקים כתיב (תהלים נח, יא) ישמח צדיק כי חזה נקם, ויזכור מלחמתו של אברהם אבינו עם המלכים, ומלחמתו של דוד עם גלית הפלשתי שהיה לא בחרב ולא בחנית.

house, and didn't know if he had another house to move into. I said, "Do you have any *safek* that Hashem is not going to put you out on the street? Do you really think that you will live on the street?" I said, "I promise you He will give you a house!" He said, "How can you promise me that?" I said, "Do you live in Lakewood? Have you ever seen one Jewish family living on the street?" How about a modern Jewish family? How about a very frum Jewish family whose father has got his face buried in a *gemara*? Have you ever seen a guy without two cars? No, you don't see that. People have nice houses, paupers! Hashem provides for them. I said, "I guarantee you." He said, "Are you sure?" I said, "I'm sure beyond sure." I said, "Don't trust me. Trust Hashem." The guy needed to move out. He gave up the lease to somebody else. Then he had to find another place. There were two days left. I remember he called me three times a day. "You've got to help me out." I said, "You've got to calm down. It's going to work out. You have two days. You have a full two days before you have to move out. What do you need to know today? You're not moving out today." The on last day it came through. I said, "You see what I mean?" I said, "Let this be a lesson for life. Trust in Hashem. You have no other *eitzah*."

Here's a fellow who calls me up. He bought a house in a development. He couldn't afford it. It was way over his head. He was living in the basement, hoping to rent out the upstairs. The problem was, in the development he bought in, there were many upstairs places available, and his was nothing special. Nothing was happening. The guy figured, "Listen, I'm finished." Eventually, he moved out and went to a *kollel* in another state. He called me up. He was *mamash ois mentch*. I don't blame him. He said, "Listen, I can't rent the place out. It's going to be foreclosed on me." I said, "Listen, Hashem helped you get this place. Why should you assume Hashem is taking away a house from you? Hashem doesn't take away houses from *yungerleit* who are learning. He doesn't give you one if He thinks you don't need it, but He gave you the house already." He says, "Do you know how many homes there are for sale in my development? Should I drop the price?" I said, "Listen. You've got to have *bitachon*. You've got to trust that Hashem is dealing with you personally. Tell yourself, 'I have no other *eitzah*. Hashem. If You want to take the house back from me, it's Yours. But if You don't, I'm putting my trust in You, Hashem. You've got to help me.'" In one day, the guy got a customer. He rented the upstairs apartment. It was the craziest story!

What happened? The house next to his was also up for rent. Now, all the houses there are clones; carbon-copy houses. The next-door neighbor, who was a renter, was showing the house he lived in to somebody. He comes out of the house, and he sees another guy standing looking around. The neighbor says to this guy, "Oh, my next door neighbor also has a house with an upstairs unit for rent. Maybe you want to take a look at it?" The guy is thinking: "It's the same house, a carbon copy." He walks into his house. "We like this house." They took the house. He calls me up, "Rebbi, I got a renter for upstairs. But what's with the basement?" I said, "Hashem has got plenty of tenants for you." He said, "Do you know how many basements there are in my development?" I said, "Your basement has one tenant, that's it." A very short time afterwards, he got a tenant for the basement, too.

You've got to understand *ich hob nisht ken andere eitzah*, and if you don't have an *eitzah*, then Hashem is going to save you. But you have to turn it around. You have to realize Hashem is telling you: "You are going to get your *parnasah* without *hishtadlus*." I can't tell you how many *yungerleit* said to me, "Maybe Hashem wants me to go to work." I said, "Do you have a job right now? Did your father offer you a position? Did your *shver* offer you a position? What job are you going to do? Are you going to go work in NPGS? What are you going to do? You're going to bag groceries? You think that's what Hashem wants you to do? If you think that's what Hashem wants you to do, be my guest. But if you think it's not for you, trust in Hashem." If there's nothing you can do, Hashem is telling you: You don't need to be *meshtadel*. You can't be *meshtadel*. ישועת ה' כהרף עין.

Zugt the Beis Halevi, sometimes the guy is up against the wall, and he says, "How am I going to get out of this pickle?" Says the Beis Halevi, דרכי ה' נעלמים המה מעיני האדם ותשועת ה' כהרף עין, the ways of Hashem are hidden from the eyes of people and the salvation of Hashem comes *k'heref ayin*, in a blink of an eye. I don't care if the Amalekim are coming after you. I don't care who is coming after you. He says, think about the *milchamah* of Avraham Avinu. Avraham Avinu took these guys on - unbelievable. So everybody says, "But I'm not Avraham Avinu." I say, "Your enemies are not Avraham Avinu's enemies either. I don't see any five kings coming after you. I don't see any empires coming at you. He was one man, and empires came after him." If Hashem put it in the Torah, He put it in for a lesson. That's the lesson. That's what you have to learn from this parshah. When you understand that it's a situation of ואיש לא ידע לו גואל, that you don't have anyone to redeem the field - you don't have any options - then you're *zocheh* ידו והשיגה ידו, you find the means - you're *zocheh* to a *yeshuah* - because you put your *bitachon* in Hashem.

Bachurim can do this also. Any *bachur* can do this. When they have needs, they usually ask their parents. *Bachurim* try to help themselves. They call their friends. "Do you know of anything for me? You know a job? You know this? You know that?" They try to hook up, build networks, and all kinds of things. Train yourself to ask Hashem. Trust in Hashem. And if a person does that, Hashem will help.

IF A TZARAH SUDDENLY COMES, CHECK YOUR MAASIM

Now, if a person lost his job and he has some kind of a *tzarah* and Hashem clearly showed him he has a *chisaron* in his *parnasah*, what's the first thing most people do? They look to increase their *hishtadlus*. *Zugt* the Beis Halevi: לא ירבה בהשתדלותו, don't increase your *hishtadlus*, and instead of טובים שבידו, רק יפשפש במעשיו אשר לא טובים שבידו, be *mefashfesh*, examine your actions that are improper לו שסיבבו לו - to see what brought this about, as the *gemara* says in *Brachos* (5a), and *daven* to Hashem, and be *mechazek* yourself in your *bitachon* in Hashem that He could help.⁵

Now people say, "How do I be *mefashfesh bema'asav*?" And I tell people very simply, if Hashem is taking away your *mezonos*, ask yourself the following questions: Is there anybody out there who thinks you took away their *mezonos*? Were you ever *mazik* somebody and did not pay him back? Did you ever damage a *yeshivah* you were in? Did you ever cause *hezek* to another *bachur* in a *yeshivah* or camp? Do you know how many guys, *bachurim*, who have taken out cars and were *mazik* the car? They hit somebody else's car, and they thought they got away with it, and in the end, Hashem comes to collect from them? You know how many *bachurim* took away jobs from someone else because they thought they needed it? How many guys hurt other people in the pocket?

⁵ וזאת תורת האדם הישר כשמגיע לו איזה צער חלילה ירבה או חסרון מזונות לא בהשתדלותו רק יפשפש במעשיו אשר לא טובים שבידו כל זה, וכאמרם (ברכות ה). אם רואה אדם שיסורים באין עליו יפשפש במעשיו, וישוב ממעשיו הרעים וישפוך שיחו לפני הקב"ה שיחלצו למרחב, כמא"כ (תהלים קב, א) תפלה לעני כי יעטוף ולפני ה' ישפוך שיחו, וכאמרם במס' דה"ע (ע) מה יעשה אדם ויתעשר תפיל למי שהעושר והנכסים שלו. ויחזק לבו בבטחונו ובתקוותו בו יתברך ויקבע בלבו אשר בלעדו יתברך אין לו ממי לבקש עזרה. וכבר מבואר בספר נפש החיים אשר אם רואה אדם את עצמו בצער חלילה יתבונן באחדות הבורא אשר אין עוד מלבדו ואז ממילא יסתלקו ממנו כל הדינים והקטרוגים, וכמא"כ (ישעיה' מו, ד) אני עשיתי ואני אשא ואני אסבול ואמלט.

How many guys borrowed money from others and didn't pay back, leaving them hanging dry? They get married, they go on in life, they grow up, and one day, boom! They lose their job. And they can't figure out what happened. Why did it happen? You know why? Because Hashem is talking to you.

I once had a *yungerman*, who came to me. I told the guy, "Were you a *ganav* when you were a kid?" He said, "What?" I said, "Maybe you were a *ganav*?" All of a sudden, the guy's eyes opened up like saucers. The guy said, "Was I a *ganav*?" He said, "I ripped off every store in the neighborhood. Every store. On a daily basis." I said, "Were they Jewish stores or *goyishe* stores?" "I ripped them off left and right. I went from store to store." I said, "How about *pushkes*?" "Oh, *pushkes*. You don't want to know about *pushkes*. The shul near me had about five of them in the shul. Four of the *pushkes* were accessible. Yes, I took money from the *pushkes*." I said, "My friend, this is just the beginning of the story." "But that was a long time ago, Rebbe." I said, "I understand." I said, "Be *makbel* to make amends." "How?" I said, "Sit down and write a notebook, put the name of the stores on top, and make a *kabbalah* you're going to start paying back. Tell Hashem, 'If You give me the money, I'm going to pay back.'" The guy did it. It was months. He kept on thinking and remembering new things. In camp, he stole this and that. The guy paid everything back. He went to the people. He paid back. Some knew, some didn't. The guy said, "I never felt so good in my life." I said, "You're going to see your *parnasah* turn around." I said, "I believe that's why Hashem did it to you."

Many people become *shnorers* afterwards. They don't have money so they go *shnoring* from other people. They get all depressed. This guy was actually *mesaken* himself. He had a relative that used to do the *geneivos* with him. He also got that relative to do teshuvah. He started earning. He got some nice checks. He paid back all the *geneivos*. He had to figure out what candies cost. A couple of dollars a day. He said he was a daily ripper. The guy's *parnasah* turned around. I told him to give tzedakah afterwards. The guy's *parnasah* turned around afterwards. Nothing else changed in his life. I said, "You see, it's amazing." You don't realize, the first thing you've got to do is to be *mefashfesh bema'asav*. A lot of people take stuff from other people without realizing. They thought it was nothing. But Hashem thought it was something.

A guy from New York calls me up. "My *parnasah* is dead." I said, "There's got to be a reason for it." I said, "Are you a *ganav*?" He said, "I'm a very respectful person." I said, "Tell me, do you have employees?" "Lots of them." "Do they think you're a *ganav*?" "They don't like me." I said, "What do they say about you?" "They say I'm not honest. I don't pay them." I said, "You know what? I would suggest you pay them." I said, "Do you pay yourself? Pay them first before you pay yourself. You'll see your *parnasah* will turn around." He did. The guy couldn't believe it. A person is a *ganav* right in front of his own nose and doesn't even realize it.

When things happen and there are sudden changes, it means Hashem is now collecting from you. But a *yungerman* whose family just grows naturally, he didn't do anything wrong. So Hashem is telling him, "You have no jobs right now, none available for you, so trust Hashem." But if a guy has a job and suddenly has a downfall, he has to think maybe something went wrong over here. He has to fix it up.

Hakadosh Baruch Hu should help us be able to employ this *bitachon*, to come to the awareness, to *shteig* and grow in our *kesher* with Hashem through *bitachon*.

IN CONCLUSION

This *parshah* is rich in *mitzvos* that can help us acquire the *middah* of *bitachon*, such as *Shemittah* and *geulas hasadeh*. In the situation of *geulas hasadeh*, when a person realizes that there is no human being on whom he can rely to redeem his field, he will rely on Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and he will grow in *bitachon*. As a result, והשיגה ידו, he himself will obtain the money to redeem his field, says the Netziv. We must remember that even when family can help us out, they are merely the messengers of Hashem. We tend to panic when we can't see how we will bring in income. We should say, "Hashem will give us *parnasah* one way or another." We have got to trust in Hashem to bring it, even while we do *hishtadlus*. After trying, if there is still no solution in sight, we can throw the problem completely onto Hashem, as the Beis Halevi says that when the gates of *hishtadlus* appear to be locked, it means we are *patur* from further *hishtadlus*. When we rely on Hashem completely, He will take care of us and He will save us. If however, we had a *parnasah* running and Hashem took it away, we should analyze our *maasim* to see what needs fixing. This week (*bli neder*), I will make an accounting of my *parnasah*, assessing how I am doing in my *bitachon* and how I can improve, and if I have *maasim* that need to be repaired.