



בס"ד

Selections, in English, on Parshas HaShavua, from the Spinka Rebbe, Shlita, of Bnai Brak

Selections from **Parshas Yisro, 5774**

V'Ani Tefilla

The Pri HaAretz comes to clarify the point that as long as a person “understands” what HaKadosh BoruchHu is doing with him and how He is directing him, then he, that person, is living in the world of *teva*, the natural world and the natural way things seem to operate. But the way to see if we are really connected to the Creator of the World is by seeing how we accept the situations where we *don't* understand what Hashem wants from us...

There is a story which illustrates this: A chasid of Rav Asher Freund, זי"ע needed to travel overseas. Somehow, he read the departure time on his ticket incorrectly, and missed his plane. He immediately arranged a new ticket that ended up costing him a lot more than the first one. After hurrying to catch this plane, he settled down in his seat and began to think in the way that an *Oved Hashem* thinks, asking himself what was hidden in these events. He must have been thinking that “For sure HaKadosh BoruchHu didn't want me to travel on that first plane, and everything happens with *hashgacha*; who knows what happened to that flight, if it landed safely, etc.”

When he landed he found out that the first plane had landed safely three hours previously.

Then another thought became clear to him: “How shallow I am that I consider the possibility that for my sake, in order for me to see the Chesed of Hashem and His Ways, another plane crashed and hundreds of people were lost. Isn't it enough to see the Chesed of Hashem in the fact that I arrived right now? HaKadosh BoruchHu has His reasons why he put me in exactly the situation I was in, and my job is to believe, to have *emunah*, that everything is Chesed, especially when I don't understand what's happening.”

Therefore, it's not said that it's forbidden for a person to have different thoughts, only that in the end he should arrive at the real and true conclusions concerning all that which a person is missing, and how HaKadosh BoruchHu fills that space, and this creates a connection between that person and Himself.

Further, if a person thinks that the idea of living with *emunah* is that he will live hand-in-hand, so to speak, with HaKadosh BoruchHu, he is mistaken. Rav Yitzchak of Vorki, ז"ע clarifies that from the posuk, "And Yitzchak sowed and found that he had increased by a hundred-fold; Hashem had blessed him."

We want to understand why the Torah wrote that Hashem blessed him only at the end, after he had the great increase. It would have made sense if it would have written it at the beginning, after which he found that he had great profit that year. Rav Yitzchak explains that the Torah is teaching a basic fundamental principle. It's true that a person needs to live in *emunah*, and he is in need of the abundance that comes from Above, and blessings from Shamyim.

But all that is after he has made his maximum efforts (*hishtadlus*). This posuk is coming to tell us that Yitzchak Avinu didn't only sit and rely on his *bitochon* in Hashem, believing that Hashem will bring him everything he needs, but he also exerted himself in the digging of the wells. He received a special brocha because he didn't trouble Hashem to perform a miracle for him, but instead did the natural things. And that raised him up...

The Pri HaAretz also talks about this when talking of the *inyan* of Yosef HaTzadik asking the wine steward to remember him: "And he (the wine steward) forgot him because the main component of *teva*, nature, is the component of *forgetfulness*. But the source of memory is above nature..."

The Pri HaAretz talks a lot about this in Parshas Zachor. He asks how it is possible to command a person to remember something that is not within his reach (דבר שאינו בהישג יד), to remember what Amalek did. Further on in his discussion he brings a basic fundamental, which is that all remembrance and all forgetfulness are two types of life, (שני צורות היים). The essential component of the way of nature is forgetfulness, but when a person lives the life of *emunah*, he lives with Memory. In any case the Torah commands us to live in Memory, the Memory that is above *derech ha teva*, the natural way things seem to operate; that is to say that we will raise ourselves above *teva*, so that we won't be busy with things that are forgotten, the forgetfulness inherent in nature and the usual way of looking at people and things. We will then automatically fulfill the mitzvah of *Remembrance*.

He goes on and explains very well the *inyan* of Yosef and the wine steward. Yosef did the *hishtadlus* that he needed to do, but since he used the words "If only you will *remember* me..." Hashem took him in a different direction. If he was talking of *remembrance*, then, according to what we have been saying now, that remembrance is above nature, and has no connection or relevance to the wine steward.

Therefore, Hashem took him in a way that was also above nature, in order that Yosef would arrive at the 8th level of *bitochon* (which we explained elsewhere), and join with the point of *emunah* that comes after all efforts have been nullified, given up, let go of.

In truth, Yosef HaTzadik had to undergo another two years in the prison in order to internalize this point of *emunah* which is above the way of nature. Because as long as a person has his own way of doing things, is exercising his own *hishtadlus*, he is not able to be truly attached to an *emunah* that seems to contradict the things that he is doing.

Rav Asher זי"ע explained this based on the words, "בעל כרחך אתה חי" ("against your will you live"). In order that a person shall live in the way of *bitul*, nullification, and *emunah*, he is given a gift from Shamyim, even against his will, even if it seems to contradict the way he understands things! But when he becomes *batul*, when he joins himself to this, he finds the life-force that is within it...

התפילה בדווקא היא המרכיב החיוני...

Tefilla is the essential vital ingredient enabling man to be connected with the Creator. We know that all physical things are really garments of spiritual light, with many garments clothing them so that we will have a way to be able to grasp the light of Hashem. And everything physical has many garments and little visible light.

Our job is to live in such a way that what we experience is not the covering that we see with our eyes of flesh, but, rather, the light which gives it life. The letters of tefillah have in them a lot of light and few coverings, in order to give strength to a person to raise himself up and live above nature. Because without Torah and tefillah, how would a person be able to live above nature, being that his body is completely absorbed within nature?

Therefore, when a person lives his life all the time within nature, without attempting to reveal the life-force that's within the thing he is facing, then his tefilla is also physical without any awakening life and connection.

The person who is searching all the time to reveal the Shechina, but he is not successful because nature enraps him, then when he comes to daven, his tefillah raises him up and gives him new strength (כוחות חדשים) to stand up as he continues on his way...

—translated by yaakov branfman