

לעילוי נשמת  
מרת עקא עדנה  
צפורה ע"ה  
בת משה מנחם הלוי ז"ל



# עילוי נשמת

## ALIEI DESHE

Weekly Torah Insights and inspiration on the Parsha from the Rosh Yeshiva Shlit"a of Gur

## Hashem is the Means

The Baal Shem Tov taught that there are three elements to *bitachon*. Firstly, there is the *botei'ach*, the one who trusts. In the case of *bitachon* in Hashem, the *botei'ach* trusts and relies on Hashem. Secondly, there is the *mavtiach*, the one who is relied upon and trusted. In the case of *bitachon* in Hashem, this refers to Hashem. The third element is the *mitvach*, the means by which the

income. The income is the *mitvach*. An income will insure that his family has what it needs.

The *pasuk* speaks of a higher level of *bitachon*. 'ברוך הגבר אשר יבטח בה' וְהָיָה ה' - *Blessed is the man who relies on Hashem and Hashem is his reliance.*<sup>1</sup> The Baal Shem Tov explains that one who truly trusts in Hashem does not need any outside vehicle to deliver his needs. Hashem Himself is the *mitvach*, 'וְהָיָה ה' מִבְּטָחוֹ.

In other words, a person can have *bitachon* that Hashem is writing his paycheck, but a higher level of *bitachon* doesn't recognize the paycheck at all. This *botei'ach* sees no paper trail of how he gets what he needs; he sees only that Hashem is the One providing for him.<sup>2</sup>

Even when a person has *bitachon*, relies on Hashem; still, a small shift can conceal that *bitachon* very easily. Let's take an example of someone who davened for *parnassah* this week. He fulfilled the popular *segulah* of reciting *parshas hamann* on Tuesday of Parshas Beshalach, *shnayim mikra v'echad targum*. But suppose he wants to do some *hishtadlus*: he buys a lottery

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## Neutralized Names of Avodah Zarah

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר. דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׁבּוּ וַיִּחַנּוּ לִפְנֵי פִי הַחִירֹת בֵּין מִגְדֹּל וּבֵין הַיָּם, לִפְנֵי בַעַל צְפֹן נֶכְחוֹ תַחְנוּ עַל הַיָּם.

*Hashem spoke to Moshe saying: Speak to the Bnei Yisrael and they should withdraw and camp before Pi Hachiros, between Migdol and the Sea, before Baal Tzefon - opposite it - camp on the seashore.*

Rabbeinu Yehudah Sir Leon (cited in the *Daas Zekeinim* of the *Baalei HaTosafos*)<sup>8</sup> asks how the Torah can use the *avodah zarah* of Baal Tzefon as a reference, when the Gemara<sup>9</sup> clearly forbids mentioning an *avodah zarah* by name.

The Ohr Sameach<sup>10</sup> and R. Yeruchem Fishel Perla<sup>11</sup> both wonder about this question of Rabbeinu Yehudah Sir Leon. It is clear from the same Gemara that this prohibition of mentioning the name of an *avodah zarah* excludes the names of *avodah zarah* that are mentioned in the Torah. So, on the contrary: the fact that the Torah mentions the name of Baal Tzefon teaches that mentioning this name is permitted.

Now, it seems there are two ways to understand this Gemara. Why is it that an *avodah zarah* mentioned in the Torah may be mentioned by name? It may be that the very mention of it in the Torah allows its

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8 His family's coat of arms was a lion. For this reason he is occasionally referred to as 'Rabbeinu HaAryeh'. See, however, *Otzar Hagedolim* vol. IV p. 50, who gives an alternative explanation.

9 Sanhedrin 63b.

10 Avodah Zarah 5:11.

11 Published in *Kontrats Agur* דבי היילולא p. 14.

It's truly remarkable that such a small slip of paper can conceal such a tremendous Eibershter.

*mavtiach* will deliver whatever it is that the *botei'ach* will get.

Let's use the common example of *parnassah*. A person trusts Hashem to send him the necessary means to provide for his family. He is a *botei'ach*. He relies on Hashem; Hashem is his *mavti'ach*, the object of his trust. He trusts that Hashem will send him an

1 Yirmiyahu 17:7.

2 *Degel Machaneh Ephraim*, Beshalach (ע"פ ויאמרו איש אל אחיו מן הוא), quoting his grandfather, the Baal Shem Tov.

# Hashem is the Means

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ticket. Now he has a foolproof, two-pronged strategy! He has the *tefillah*, so Hashem will want to give him fabulous financial success, and he has the lottery ticket through which Hashem can funnel the funds.

But such a person does not have Hashem as his *mitvach*. The lottery ticket is his *mitvach*. Hashem is only his *mavti'ach*, and he trusts that Hashem will send him His divine help through the lottery ticket. It's truly remarkable that such a small slip of paper can conceal such a tremendous *Eibershter*.

A person has to instill in himself that while he goes to work to fulfill his obligation as part of the curse of Adam Harishon, he can't forget that Hashem is providing. The work that he is engaged in is not even a conduit or vehicle through which he receives his needs; rather, Hashem Himself is the vehicle.

The Baal Shem Tov's grandson, the Degel Machaneh Ephraim, uses his grandfather's teaching to explain the words of Klal Yisrael when they saw the *mann* (16:15). וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל אָחִיו מִן הַמָּן הֲוֹא כִּי לֹא יָדְעוּ מֶה הוּא, וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִן הַמָּן - אֲלֵהֶם הוּא הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן ה' לָכֶם לֶאֱכֹלָהּ - *Bnei Yisrael saw [the frost-like substance] and each man said to his friend, "it is 'mann,'" for they did not know what it is. And Moshe said to them, "This is the bread that Hashem has given you to eat."* Although they relied on Hashem as a *mavti'ach*, the people did not achieve the realization that Hashem Himself is the *mitvach* as well. They looked to identify the vehicle by which Hashem was providing the

sustenance to them. So they called it *mann*, which means food, because 'they did not know what it is' - they didn't know that it is Hashem Himself Who provides.

The *Panim Yafos* takes this idea further. He says that those who relied on Hashem completely were privileged to receive the sustenance of the *mann* as a *ruchniyusdike* substance. Those who did not achieve that level of reliance on Hashem were given the *mann* as a physical, albeit refined, food.

The *Panim Yafos* reads this into a *pasuk* in Tehillim which extols the miracle of the *mann*. לֶחֶם אֲבִירִים אָכַל אִישׁ. *Bread of the mighty, men ate; He sent fare to them to satiation.*<sup>3</sup> He explains that the *pasuk* refers to two levels of sustenance. לֶחֶם אֲבִירִים, we learn from the Gemara,<sup>4</sup> refers to the sustenance of the *malachei hashareis*. They are spiritual beings, and their sustenance is spiritual as well. אִישׁ<sup>5</sup>, the *tzaddikim*, such as Moshe Rabbeinu, received the *mann* in this spiritual form. They merited to sustain their physical body through this food of *ruchniyus*. (In a similar manner it is told of certain *tzaddikim* who received their sustenance through their connection with Hashem. They would hold food in their hands, and it would dissolve and vanish in their hands.)

The people who did not reach this level of *bitachon* were given the *mann* as food. צִידָה שֶׁלָּח לָהֶם לְשׁוּבַע, they received their fare, each according to his level of *bitachon*.

This will help us gain insight in another *pasuk* in this week's *parshah*,

according to the Sfas Emes. Hashem instructs Moshe Rabbeinu, מְלֵא הָעֶמֶר, to store an 'omer' full of *mann* as a remembrance for posterity. Then Moshe tells Aharon to carry out Hashem's instruction, קַח צְנֻפֶת, אַחַת וְתֵן שָׁמָּה מְלֵא הָעֶמֶר מֶן, וְהָנַח אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי ה' *take one jar and place inside an omer-full of mann, and place it before the Aron Hashem, as a memento for your generations.*<sup>6</sup>

The Sfas Emes is troubled by the seemingly superfluous 'מלא'. Why couldn't the instructions be to take an *omer* of *mann*; why 'an omer-full'? The Sfas Emes explains *al pi pshat* that the jar was to be exactly an *omer* in size, so that the *mann* can truly be characterized as an 'omer-full.'<sup>7</sup> The Sfas Emes leaves it at that, and does not explain the significance of this detail. Why was it so important that the jar be exactly an *omer* in size?

According to what we have just learned, we can understand that there is a deep message here. The *mann* served to remind us for all generations to rely on Hashem. Don't think that alongside the *bitachon* we can leave room for ourselves as well, to buy a Powerball ticket, or to engage in too much *hishtadlus*. Hashem says that the jar should be completely filled with the *mann*, to teach us and to remind us that Hashem is the *mavti'ach* and the *mitvach*. Hashem wanted this undiluted message saved for posterity, to teach all the coming generations what true *bitachon* is.

(ס"ג פרשת בשלח תשפ"ג, מאמר א)

3 Tehillim 78:25.

4 Yoma 75b.

5 See Ramban 16:6.

6 16:32-33.

7 *Likutim Beshalach*, s.v. צְנֻפֶת.

# Neutralized Names of Avodah Zarah

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use.<sup>12</sup> Another understanding would be that by mentioning it, the Torah reveals that – for some reason unknown to us – this name is not included in the prohibition. In other words, is the fact that the Torah mentioned it the reason we can mention it, or is there another reason, and the Torah mentioning it notifies us that this name, for some reason, may be mentioned? Is it a *sibah* or a *siman*?

We find two explanations in the *Rishonim* for why the name of an *avodah zarah* mentioned in the Torah may be mentioned.<sup>13</sup> The first is a *She'iltos*<sup>14</sup> who explains based on a Talmudic concept called 'הואיל ואשתרי, אשתרי' which, in limited cases, extends an exemption given regarding one prohibition to situations where the exemption is not strictly necessary.<sup>15</sup> Here, too, since we may mention the name when reading the Torah, we may mention it even outside the context of reading the Torah.

R. Yosef Engel asks on the *She'iltos*: according to his explanation, the Gemara that permits mentioning the name of an *avodah zarah* mentioned in the Torah would be limited to the opinion that subscribes to the concept of 'הואיל ואשתרי, אשתרי'. However, we don't find that the dissenting opinion (that does not acknowledge this concept) objects to this allowance of mentioning the name of an *avodah zarah*.

Perhaps we can explain that this instance of 'הואיל ואשתרי' is universally accepted, since the idea behind the prohibition of mentioning the name of an *avodah zarah* is that we should not contribute to the perpetuation of the *avodah zarah*. When the Torah mentions it, since we are obligated to learn the Torah, we must mention it, and we must remember it. Can we rationally claim that outside of reading the Torah it is forbidden lest it be remembered? It is imperative to remember it, as it is part of the Torah! It must be that the Torah permits mentioning it under any circumstance.

In any case, if the reason to allow mentioning an *avodah zarah* that is mentioned in the Torah is 'הואיל ואשתרי אשתרי', it seems clear that the mention in the Torah is the *sibah* for why there is no prohibition.

A second reason is given by the *Yerei'im*,<sup>16</sup> who says that if the Torah mentions the name of the *avodah zarah*, the *avodah zarah* has been rendered null and void, and for the same reason the Torah mentions it, we are allowed to mention it. It seems that the *Yerei'im* assumes that the fact that the Torah mentions the name is a *siman* that it is not prohibited.

Since we know that there are foreign gods mentioned in the Torah which were subsequently still worshipped,<sup>17</sup> we must understand that when the *Yerei'im* says that the *avodah zarah* must have been rendered null, it does not mean the *avodah zarah* itself is null, but rather that there is some reason that any issue with mentioning its name has been neutralized.

The *Acharonim* who asked on Rabbeinu Yehudah Sir Leon apparently understood like the *Yerei'im*, that the fact that the name is mentioned in the Torah reveals to us that there is no problem with mentioning that name. Accordingly they ask: Obviously, if Hashem mentions the name, He must know that this name is not problematic. Why then should He not use it as a point of reference?

The *Daas Zekeinim* must have understood that it is the Torah's mentioning of the name itself which neutralizes the name from the prohibition to mention it. Accordingly, they ask: Since the Torah was not yet given, the name was not, as of yet, neutralized, why does the Torah mention it?<sup>18</sup>

It seems, then, that the difference of opinions here is based on the divergent understandings of this halachah.

(מתוך ליל ש"ק פרשת בשלח תשע"ו, בנאות  
דשא בשלח שנה ג גליון קלב)

# Torah and Parnassah

There are two quotes from the Kotzker on one *Chazal* that seem to contradict each other. *Chazal* say 'לא ניתנה תורה אלא לאוכלי המן' *the Torah was given specifically to the ones who ate mann*.<sup>19</sup>

On one occasion the Kotzker remarked, "Who are the *ochlei hamann*? The '*kest yungeleit*.'"<sup>20</sup> That is, the Torah was given to the ones who don't have any need to engage in business; all of their needs are provided for in their father-in-law's home.<sup>21</sup>

On another occasion, the Kotzker once called over his attendant, Reb Feivel, and asked him, "Reb Feivel, what do you think is the explanation for the statement of *Chazal*, 'The Torah was given only to *ochlei hamann*?'" Reb Feivel answered that it refers to those who don't have the stresses of *parnassah*: the *kest yungeleit*. Their minds are free and clear to be involved in their learning without interruption or distraction. The Kotzker challenged Reb Feivel, "What about 'וישמן ישרון ויבעט' – *Yeshurun became corpulent and rebelled*? Having an easy life is not the best recipe for growth in Torah! Rather," said the Kotzker, "I think that it refers to people who have food only for today and yet do not worry about tomorrow. Just like the *ochlei hamann*."<sup>22</sup> One who lives with the *bitachon* that Hashem is his provider is one who can remove

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12 Perhaps the *kedushah* of the Torah's words negates any negative power associated with the name of an *avodah zarah*.

13 *Gilyonei HaShas*, Sanhedrin 63b.

14 Parshas Yisro, end of *She'ilta* 52.

15 See *Gilyonei HaShas*, Kiddushin 21b.

16 245.

17 See Gemara Sanhedrin 63b from Yeshayahu 65:11.

18 Support for this assumption can be found in *She'eilos U'Teshuvos Sho'el U'Meishiv, telisa'ah* vol. I 225.

19 *Mechilta* 16:4.

20 It was common practice for newly-married scholars to live in their father-in-law's home for a predetermined period of time, so they could learn without worries. Their expenses were paid and their needs provided. This system was called *kest*.

21 See *Emes V'Emunah*, Yerushalayim 5733, p. 53.

22 *Ibid* p. 98.

# The Sfas Emes

## 'Doros' Assembly on the Occasion of his 119th Yahrzeit

We were not sure if it is right to assemble for a *yahrzeit*, at a time when Yiddishe blood is *nebach* being shed. It is bad enough that we continue on the course of our lives, but it seems that such a gathering at such a critical time might be improper. But since we are here to learn from the Sfas Emes on his *yahrzeit*, on the contrary, it will help us empathize with our fellow Jews who are in harm's way.

The Sfas Emes was *moser nefesh* for Yidden all of his life, but especially during his final months, when he was consumed with the pain of the Yidden enduring unbelievable pain and loss in the Russo-Japanese war. The wars of today are not so different from the wars of those days, and without a doubt his *zechus* will stand by us, to protect and to save, when we gather for the purpose of remembering his ways and implementing what he instructed us in our lives.

And so, during such a critical time, we so desperately need the *zechus* of the Sfas Emes, *zy" a*, and those who came before him. Therefore, this is the appropriate time for such a gathering.

The *yahrzeit* always coincides with the weeks of the *makkos*. We need to understand

that the Sfas Emes lived his entire life seeing the hand of Hashem in every corner of life. If his *yahrzeit* always coincides with these weeks, we need to find the connection; we need to find the hand of Hashem and the lesson to be learned.

The Rebbe R. Bunim of Pershischa *zy" a* said that he could make a *mofes*, causing the rafts floating down the Vistula River to float upstream instead, against the current. The reason he didn't do it was that no benefit would be gained from doing so. In Berlin people would sit down to their newspapers with a cup of tea and a cigar, and read about how a *wunder-rabbiner* named Bunim the Pharmacist of Pershischa performed a nature-defying feat. For a moment they would be duly impressed, and then they would take a long sip of their tea, and turn the page of the paper. The world carries on; everyone returns to their daily activities. They would not awaken to do *teshuvah* and to serve Hashem.

We don't need *nissim* for people to be impressed for a moment. The point of the *nissim* is for a person to recognize Who is behind the miracle. And, most important of all, that this recognition should be permanently imprinted on the heart.

Hashem runs the world in a concealed manner. But then He sends *nissim*. Every *neis* should peel back a layer of concealment, to reveal a layer of Hashem's *hashgachah*. Each and every *neis* that has occurred, from the creation of the world until today, peels another layer off, and reveals another layer of *hashgachah*, until the final revelations at the time of the final *geulah*.

This is the one overarching demand the Sfas Emes makes of us. Peel away the layers; recognize Hashem! And let it be a real and true recognition; a *penimiyus* recognition, igniting the inner recesses of our hearts. Let's live with a constant self-reckoning of what the Torah demands of us. We learn and we hear *divrei Torah* constantly, but how much of it really peels back layers of concealment?

May Hashem help us learn these lessons and understand them deeply. May his *zechus* work to help us to be *zoche* to *yeshuos*. May Hashem perform *nissim* for us, the final *nissim* which will eliminate all of the layers of concealment, until Hashem's *Hashgachah* will be revealed for all.

(עפי"י דברי רבנו בכנס ועידת 'דורות'  
מוצש"ק פרשת וארא תשפ"ד)

## Torah and Parnassah

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all worries from his mind and learn Torah with a clear head."

As far as we can tell the two statements seem to be in contradiction. However, it depends who you are. The *Roshei Kollel* and the supporters have to take the first approach. The *yungeleit* should be as worry-free as possible to be able to immerse themselves in Torah. The *yungeleit* themselves should adopt the second way of the Kotzker. They should clear their mind of any physical concerns. Not just

*parnassah*, but to elevate themselves and submerge all of their senses in the Torah – like the *ochlei hamann*.

And the truth is, even when the Kotzker said that the *ochlei hamann* are *kest yungeleit*, he didn't mean it superficially. He couldn't have meant that one who gets *kest* is in a better position to learn than one who does not get *kest*. Rather, *kest yungeleit* are those who live with the feeling that they are getting *kest* from the *Eibershter* Himself. Such a person lives his life with

*kedushah* and *romemus*, and his learning gains an elevated status.

May we all be *zocheh* to be like the *ochlei hamann*. Not only the young *yungeleit* who are supported with *kest*, but even the elders. In Kotzk they would say that an older person is three or four *yungeleit*... May we learn and live with *emunah* and *bitachon* in Hashem. May we all be *gebentched* with *banei, chayei, and mezonei*.

(שבע ברכות – פרשת בשלח)