

# תורת אביגדור

הגאון ר' אביגדור מיללער זצ"ל

SEFER DEVARIM - THE PENSON FAMILY EDITION

IN MEMORY OF MENDEL BEN MENDEL A"H

# TORAS AVIGDOR

RAV AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"L

פרשת ראה

*Nation of Volunteers*

PARSHA SPONSOR:

*The Safdeye Family*

לע"נ יוסף בן צלחה ע"ה



לע"נ הרב אביגדור הכהן מיללער זצ"ל | הרבנית חנה עטיל מיללער ע"ה | מאיר אבנר בן לאה ע"ה | פלוירי בת אסתר ע"ה |  
הונא בן דוד ע"ה | רות בת יוסף אשר ע"ה | היים בן סוגיא ע"ה | רחל בת ויקטוריה ע"ה | משה בן ליזא ע"ה | לינדא  
בת רינה ע"ה | שמואל בן רחל ע"ה | אליזבט בת לינדא ע"ה | שמטוב הלוי בן פלוירי ע"ה | תנצב"ה לזכות אהובה בת מרים

SEFER DEVARIM

THE **PENSON FAMILY** EDITION

IN MEMORY OF  
MENDEL BEN MENDEL A"H

**NEW!** SPECIAL EDITION TORAS AVIGDOR  
BOOKLETS FOR YOUR SIMCHA

You can now order customized Toras Avigdor booklets, including Birkas HaMazon, as a souvenir for the guests at your *Simcha*. Option to include a special section on marriage/bar mitzvah/or the topic of your choice.



Email:

[info@torasavigdor.org](mailto:info@torasavigdor.org)

Call/text

732.844.3670

**ORDER TODAY!**

Year 3 | Issue 43

© Copyright 2020 by: [TorasAvigdor.org](http://TorasAvigdor.org)

Email: [info@TorasAvigdor.org](mailto:info@TorasAvigdor.org) | Telephone: 732.844.3670

Address: 5014 16th Avenue, Suite 488, Brooklyn NY 11204

# פרשת ראה

WITH

# R' AVIGDOR MILLER ZT"l

BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

## Nation of Volunteers

### Contents:

Part I. Chassidic Nation - 3

Part II. Rabbinic Nation - 9

Part III. Chosen Nation - 16

## Part I. Chassidic Nation

### The Idolatrous City

In Parshas Re'eh the Torah tells us about the *ir hanidachas*, a Jewish city whose inhabitants were led astray to worship *avodah zarah*. וְרָשַׁת וְהִקְרַת וְשָׂאֵלְתָּ הַיָּטֵב – And after it was investigated thoroughly, וְהִנֵּה אָמַת נִכּוֹן הָרַבֵּר נַעֲשִׂיתָה הַתּוֹעֵבָה הַזֹּאת בְּקִרְבֶּךָ – and it was determined that it's true, that this terrible abomination has occurred amongst you, now the city and its inhabitants must be destroyed.

וְהָיָה תַבֵּה אֶת יִשְׁבֵי הָעִיר הַהִיא לְפִי חֶרֶב – You must surely slay all the inhabitants by the edge of the sword. Everybody; men, women and children are put to death. הַחֲרָם אֹתָהּ וְאֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר בָּהּ – Annihilate it and everything in it. The property too! וְאֵת כָּל שְׁלָלָהּ תִּקְבֹּץ אֶל תוֹךְ – You should take all of the wealth of the city and you pile it up

in the street, וְשָׂרַפְתָּ בָאֵשׁ – and burn it in a fire, וְאֵת כָּל שְׁלָלָהּ – the city and all of its booty completely.

Now, let's imagine that the sentence was carried out. The Am Yisroel, because of its loyalty to Hashem, rose like a lion to fulfill the command of the Torah and wage war against the sinners. And now, all the inhabitants are dead and the city and its property is destroyed. The deed is done.

### Sticky Fingers

Oh no, it's not! Along comes the Torah and adds something else: וְלֹא יִדְבֶק בְּיָדְךָ מִמְּאֻמָּה מִן הַחַרָּם – There shouldn't cling to your hand any of the forbidden materials (ibid. 13:18). It's a *mashal*. When you remove your hand from a bowl of clay or dirt, something always remains stuck to your hand. Even if it's just a little bit, maybe it's not so noticeable, but it's there. And so Hashem says that when you part from the destroyed city, make sure that לֹא יִדְבֶק בְּיָדְךָ מִמְּאֻמָּה – nothing should stick to your hand.

Imagine the *ir hanidachas* is a smoking ruin and you're poking around in the ashes when suddenly you see something shiny lying in the embers. It's a little trinket or a gold watch and it never caught fire; it didn't melt. Now, that trinket has nothing to do with idolatry. It's *kosher* – it has no symbol of idolatry on it and therefore if you decide to appropriate it, it certainly has no connection with the subject of destroying the city. So you're thinking, "Maybe I could keep it for myself? It's nothing after all." "No! Nothing doing!" says the *posuk*. Even that little bit shouldn't cling to your hand.

And on this the Torah adds some very important words: לְמַעַן, for the sake of that – it means for sake of your loyalty to Me that you demonstrate by not touching even the most inconsequential thing, יָשׁוּב ה'שָׁם מִחֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ, only then will Hashem turn back from the fire of His wrath.

### The Kosher Idolaters

Now, that's difficult to understand because we know that to carry out such a sentence upon a Jewish city was an upheaval of the greatest proportions. Do you know how much loyalty to the

Torah, how much love for Hashem it took to destroy a Jewish city?! It tore their hearts out to put fellow Jews to the sword.

The *ir hanidachas* after all was a city of people who ate *kosher*; they all kept Shabbos and *taharas hamishpacha*. In those days everybody kept everything. Only that in addition to everything else the people in that city dabbled in idolatry.

An idol was a sign of good luck – if you wanted to have more success in agriculture or in the health of the family so besides for *davening* to Hashem you worshipped an idol as well – we see that today too. But they were observant people; they were all *frum* Jews. And therefore the command to kill all the inhabitants of that city was a most painful decree for the *Am Yisroel*. And so, wasn't it *that* loyalty, *that* heroism, the real reason why the wrath of Hashem was turned back?

### **The Icing On The Cake**

No! The order of the *possuk* is teaching us something here. “Nothing should cling to your hand,” and only then, “will the wrath of Hashem turn away.” If you want the anger of Hashem to turn away from the *Am Yisroel*, if you want to once again achieve the favor of Hashem, then you have to go overboard! **הַבָּה תִּבְּה לְפִי הָרֹב** is not enough. It's only after you fulfill the words, “*Nothing of the forbidden material should cling to your hand,*” that's when Hashem is reconciled with us once again.

When you come to that *madreigah* that you're so opposed to what happened in that city that you won't take anything out of that place no matter how innocent the object is, then that's a sign that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is being honored by us most fully, that we are showing our greatest loyalty to the principles of the Torah. The *shi'yarei mitzvah*, the little leftovers of a *mitzvah*, the breadcrumbs that you thought are superfluous, are very important! The *Am Yisroel* is not interested in the minimum – for Hakodosh Boruch Hu we go all out!

### **Violent Na'anuim**

Now, to illustrate this a little more, we'll study something from *Mesichta Sukkah*. You know, that according to the Torah all

that is required in order to fulfill the commandment of *netilas lulav* is to take the four species in your hand. There's nothing else you have to do; in a flash the *mitzvah* is completed. The truth is that if *mitzvos ein tzrichos kavanah*, if the *din* is that you don't need to have intention for the *mitzvah*, so even if you picked up the *lulav* and the other *minim* with the intention of hurling it at somebody, you're *yotzei* already.

That's why we customarily pick up the *esrog* upside down; because if you would take it right side up, you're finished with the *mitzvah* and you didn't even make the *brachah* yet. So we take it *shelo kederech gedulasah*, that way we shouldn't fulfill the *mitzvah* yet; then you make the *brachah* and afterwards you turn it right side up. So we see that all that the *mitzvah* requires is that you should take the *daled minim* in your hand.

### **From The North Pole to Hollywood**

But among the Jewish people that's not enough. We don't put it down; we hold it in our hands and we make *na'anuim* in all four directions and up and down. We're making a demonstration that Hakodosh Boruch Hu reigns supreme everywhere. He's in the north, south, east, west, above and below.

North means He's in the North Pole. In case you happen to be stranded on the North Pole, Hakodosh Boruch Hu is there with you. If you're taking a trip to the South Pole, you'll find Him there too. If you go east to China, Hakodosh Boruch Hu is with you. If you try to run away to Hollywood, California, He's there too. Wherever you'll go you'll find Hakodosh Boruch Hu. *Ma'aleh* – if you go up in a spaceship, or *matah* – all the way down: wherever you go, He's there. And so, the *Am Yisroel* doesn't only pick up the *daled minim* and fulfill the *mitzvah*; we wave it in six directions as well.

Now, suppose a person would be *mekayem* the *mitzvah* of *netilas lulav* and he wouldn't want to make *na'anuim*; he says he's not interested or he's too busy. So the *beis din* wouldn't force him to do it. We have to force him to do the *mitzvah* of *netilas lulav*,

but we won't force him to make *na'anuim* because it's extra; it's *shiyarei mitzvah*.

### **Breadcrumbs Are Valuable**

But the *gemara* comes along and tells us something we wouldn't have known ourselves. You know how great is the seemingly insignificant act of *na'anuim*? *Shiyarei mitzvah me'akvin es hapuranuyos* – *The remnants of a mitzvah hold back destruction*. It means that adding *na'anuim* to the *mitzvah* will protect you from many troubles that come upon mankind. When we shake the *lulav* to the four corners of the compass, that restrains unfavorable winds that might come from the four directions and ruin the crops. We shake it upwards – sometimes there might be hail that might kill the crops or sometimes there might be overabundance of rain. And we shake it down below so the earth should be blessed with fertility.

The *Gemara* says that by making *na'anuim* we're being protected against illnesses, against plagues, against invasions, against earthquakes; all types of terrible things that can happen to the whole populace. Who knows what can happen, *chas v'Shalom*? And all of that *charon af*, all of the troubles that could come upon us, are turned away because of the *naanuim*.

### **Breadcrumbs of Loyalty**

Now the question is, it's only *shiyarei mitzvah*! The *mitzvah* you already accomplished the first minute you took it into your hand. And just holding it further and following these gesticulations, are they going to accomplish such tremendous achievements for you – prosperity and protection? Could such a small insignificant act like waving the four *minim* in all directions be effective in protecting against retribution?

And the answer is a resounding yes! Because you're demonstrating what's in your mind. You're demonstrating a loyalty and affection for the *mitzvah*. By doing more than seems to be needed, you demonstrate an especial love to Hashem and therefore you deserve an especial treatment by Hashem.

## A Chassidische Nation

Chazal say like this: *Eizehu chasid?* Who is called a *chossid*? *Hamischased im kono*. Somebody who shows a special devotion, an exceptional loyalty, towards his Creator. It means that the attitude of being attuned to the *ratzon Hashem*, to what Hashem wants from us, is called *chassidus*.

The *Mesilas Yesharim* gives a *mashal*. A son was walking with his father in the street and the father stopped for a moment to look into a window at a certain piece of merchandise on display. When they turned away and continued walking, the son said, “Father, what were you looking at?” “Nothing; never mind,” the father said. But the son makes note of that.

Now, if the son is the kind of son who wants to please his father, he doesn't wait for his father to say, “Son, buy me this,” or “I like this.” He loves his father, so he comes back to the store later and he buys that object for him. The father didn't request it of him, but that's the sign of a truly devoted son; whatever he *thinks* his father would like he tries to do it voluntarily, even if his father only evinces an interest; a small hint from his father is already enough for him.

## The Devoted Nation

And so too, the *Mesillas Yesharim* says, when the *Am Yisroel* sees an indication in the Torah that Hashem approves of a certain practice, we're not satisfied by doing the minimum; we go all out and add to it. We don't wait to be told; instead we seek opportunities to fulfill the desire of our beloved Father; we seek to demonstrate our loyalty and love as much as we can.

The Jewish nation loves Hashem and therefore they're not interested in merely discharging their minimum obligation. They want to go all out because that's a sign of **וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ**. A man who loves Hashem doesn't stop – *everything* he wants to do for Hashem. And so he says, “*Ribono Shel Olam! מְשַׁכְּנֵי אַחֲרֶיךָ נְרוּצָה* – *Draw us near and we'll run after You* (Shir Hashirim 1:4). Show us a little bit of what You want and we won't stop.”

## Part II. Rabbinic Nation

---

### **Jewish Inventions**

Now, if you pay attention you'll see what an important principle this is in the lives of the Jewish people; it's the underlying theme of Judaism today. Because almost everything we do is *not* what we were commanded. What it really is, is an expression of loyalty and piety – and these next words may come as a surprise to you – *that is all our own invention!* The Jewish nation invented most of the Torah!

According to the Torah, you could eat cheese and meat together. Don't tell anybody this secret but according to the Torah you can smear butter on cold meat and eat it. You can't cook it together, but to eat it cold you could. You're astonished? Maybe I shouldn't have said it. But no! The Jewish nation punctiliously observes that! Different sets of dishes! Now, two sets of dishes is a very burdensome requirement but the holy Jewish nation has done it from time immemorial because they accepted to go further than required.

We're the *am chassid*, the nation that does *lifnim mishuras hadin*. Men, women and children all gather to hear the *megillah* on Purim without fail. Which Orthodox Jew would miss hearing the *megillah*? And not once; twice! And yet, it's only an obligation *m'derabanan*.

### **Pesach Crumbs**

And what about Pesach?! The *dinim* of Pesach, most of the *chumros* of Pesach are *m'derabanan*. The Jewish nation has accepted that even a *mashehu chametz*, the smallest amount of *chametz*, which according to the Torah is *batel b'rov* or *batel b'shishim*, is forbidden; we won't even think about such a thing! The Jewish women are actually *moiser nefesh* for that! They give their lives to fulfill those laws.

Now, those are only a few examples. It's a *mashal* for thousands, for hundreds of thousands of things; it's the system of the *am Hashem*. If we look at our practices, we'll be surprised to

see that most of what we Jews do in the fulfillment of the requirements of our faith is not written in the Torah. Not only is it not written in the Torah, it's not even required by the *Torah sheba'al peh*. Almost everything that we do is an addition that our nation has voluntarily chosen to do. It's a remarkable fact!

### **Through Fire and Water**

The entire coming to the *beis haknesses*, the entire business of synagogue is not a requirement of the Torah. There's no *mitzvah* from the Torah to make *brachos*, to pray *psukei dezimra*, even *shmoneh esrei*. And yet, Jews all over the world assemble in *batei knessios* and they remain there a long time. People must go to work and it's a big inconvenience – sometimes they have to skip breakfast because of that – but they fit it into their daily program. And it's all a voluntary duty that our forefathers assumed for themselves.

And that's the greatness of our people. Of course, it's no longer voluntary because our fathers and mothers have accepted it and once our nation accepted it, it's obligatory upon us. We'll go in fire and water to maintain what we began to do - but we began it! That's how much we love Hakodosh Boruch Hu. It's a remarkable picture we're seeing now of a pious nation that seeks to do more than what is expected of them.

### **The Rabbinic Shas**

As you go through *Shas* you'll see that's how it is. Page after page of *dinim d'rabanam*. Yes, you'll find *d'oraisas*. *Bava Kamma*, *Bava Metzia*, and *Bava Basra* are almost *kulo d'oraisa* – whether it's *dinim* of the *chumash* or whether it's *lamah li kra sevarah hi*, they are all things that the Torah commands. But that's an exception to the rule! Most of *Shas* is *d'rabanans*. It's almost all an addition made by the Jewish people. Our lives are *d'rabanam* lives.

If we were limited to the laws of the Torah, instead of *Mesichta Shabbos* being a big, heavy *mesichta*, it would be a little volume, just a few *mishnayos* and some pages of *Gemara*. *Mesichta Eiruvim* is nothing but an addition that our nation made. *Mesichta Eiruvim*

is all *d'rabanan*. There isn't a single *d'oraisa* in *Mesichta Eiruvin*. *Eiruvin* is trimmings; an adornment for *Mesichta Shabbos*.

### **A Different Shabbos**

If we would keep Shabbos according to the law of the Torah and nothing else, what kind of Shabbos would it be? We wouldn't eat three meals. We wouldn't put on Shabbos garments. Of course, there wouldn't be any *shachris*, *minchah*, or *ma'ariv*. There wouldn't be any *krias haTorah* – we wouldn't even come to the synagogue. The truth is, according to the Torah, on Shabbos there's nothing to do. You just get up Friday night and declare, "It's Shabbos," and you're fulfilling the *mitzvah* of the Torah. You're *mekayem* mentioning Shabbos and you're finished. You don't need any wine; no special foods or *seudos*.

We would remain home or we would walk around in the fields. You can walk in your garden, pick up the stones and clean out your garden on Shabbos. All that would be is we would not do the thirty nine forms of work. But we would handle *muktzah*. We would be playing musical instruments. We would be doing very many things that Jews do not do on Shabbos; Shabbos would not look at all like what we consider Shabbos to be.

### **We'll Give You A Shabbos**

It's remarkable what the Jewish people did to this concept of Shabbos. Of course, Hashem is the one who gave us the hint how to do it, but we're the ones who did it – we are the ones who added and made the Shabbos so beautiful. Shabbos is a monument to the *chassidus* of the nation that says, "מִשְׁכֵּנִי אֶחְרִיךְ נְרוּצָה – Draw me near; give me a little pull and we'll run after You. Hashem, show us a little bit of what You want and we'll run."

"You want Shabbos? So we'll give You a Shabbos. Not just a Shabbos like You asked for, that we shouldn't make fire, that we shouldn't write or weave or build. No! That's not a Shabbos. We'll give You a Shabbos with all the trimmings! You want us to declare it a day of Shabbos, so we'll do it on wine. And we'll do it twice – we'll do it by day as well. We'll give You a Shabbos with *shaleshudos* and with *zemiros*. We'll give you a Shabbos with *bigdei Shabbos*, a

Shabbos with *muktzah*, a Shabbos with *krias haTorah*, and all the other appurtenances that make it the most glorious day on the calendar.”

### **The Three Day Yom Tov**

Yomtiv too! Almost all of Yomtiv is *chassidus!* The *gemara* tells us that when Yomtiv comes, it's a *mitzvah* to honor the festivals, and so we go all out. We put on *bigdei Yomtiv* and we prepare lavish *seudos*. We eat special foods and we imbibe special drinks *l'kovod Yomtiv*. The Jewish nation in exile has even added the second day of Yomtiv. The reformers are wise guys – they abolished the second day. Only the first day they wanted. Hashem says, “Run after Me,” and they get busy running in the other direction. Now, they don't keep the first day either.

But not only did we add on a day; we keep going. Because when Yomtiv comes to an end, it's all over. We're not required to do more than what Yomtiv is. You can even look through the window and count the stars that are visible to know when Yomtiv is finished. Why not? When night falls, it's all over.

But here is a man who when Yomtiv is over he's still thinking about it. Actually, it's the next day already and he has to go to work already. But this man, at breakfast, before he sets out to go to work, he puts on his table a bottle of wine. He doesn't have time to drink much, but he pours out a little thimble-full of wine at breakfast. He adds one more thing to his breakfast that he ordinarily wouldn't eat and he's doing it because of the Yomtiv that passed by. This man is adding to the *simchas Yom Tov*.

### **Living In The Past**

Now, you'll say it's foolish; it's a futile expression because after all, it's not Yomtiv. Last night was *havdalah*; it's all over. Everybody is finished already with Yomtiv. They're dressed in their weekday garments, they're all working now; the spirit of Yomtiv has departed and this silly man is trying to do what was suitable only for yesterday. Oh no! He's not silly at all! It's *isru chag!* “Anybody who makes an ‘*isru chag*’, an addition to Yom Tov by eating something and drinking something additional, the Torah

considers it for him as if he built an altar to Hashem and he offered an offering” (Sukkah 45b).

A *korban*?! But it's the day after *Yomtiv*?! It's all over! The *Beis Hamikdash* is empty – everybody has gone home! No; you haven't gone home yet. You're still in the atmosphere of *Yomtiv* because you hate to part from Hashem.

Don't think that your little breakfast celebration is considered a small thing! It's the great lesson that adding beyond what you were commanded is such an achievement that it's as if he has built a *mizbeyach* and he has brought an offering to Hashem. And *Hakodosh Boruch Hu* accepts that devotion of a loving heart!

### **Better Than Wine**

Rabeinu Yonah in *Sha'arei Teshuvah* quotes a statement of Chazal that will help elaborate our subject: *Chavivin divrei sofrim meaynah shel Torah* – The words of the scribes, it means the obligations that the sages created for the Jewish people, are more beloved than even the words of the Torah.

Now, some people bristle when they hear that! The *dinei d'rabanah*, the laws invented by the sages are more prized than the words of *Hakodosh Boruch Hu*?! Isn't that a queer thing to say?

But Rabeinu Yonah explains it as follows. He says that if someone sincerely loves the words of the Torah, then he'll create new safeguards, altogether new prohibitions, in order that he shouldn't come close to transgressing the words of the Torah.

He says like this: It's like a king who planted an orchard of delicious fruit and beautiful flowers. So what did his loyal servants do? They made a fence around that garden so that no one should be able to trespass. Now, the king didn't command them to make that fence; they did it on their own. And that's the greatness of the fence – it demonstrates their solicitude in protecting the garden; it demonstrates their interest in finding favor in the eyes of the king.

## **Good Fences Make Good Nations**

And so we understand that when the sages of our nation built certain fences, certain prohibitions of their own, in order that the nation should be restrained from trespassing the laws of the Torah, that too was an expression of genuine love of Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

And when the Jewish nation voluntarily accepted those fences, all the more so was it an expression of *ahavas Hashem*. After all the sages weren't rulers; they didn't have power. Their power came from the people and therefore any decree that the *chachamim* made was a decree of the people. And so when our forefathers accepted voluntarily to add to their obligations, it was a demonstration of love for the Torah – so much love that they want to beware of anything that even in the most remote way might lead to a transgression.

### **The Rosy Fence**

And that's a principle that the Jewish nation has followed collectively. It's a national system that the *Am Yisroel* has practiced from its inception. As soon as we became a nation, we understood that principle and we carried it out. *Asu syag laTorah* – *Make a fence around the Torah* (Avos 1:1) because if you have a fence it will protect you from coming inside the garden and being enticed to eat the forbidden fruits.

But it's not like some people think, that it's a fence of thorns. In Shir HaShirim (7:3) it says, סִיָּגָה בַּשֹּׁשְׁבַיִם – *The Am Yisroel is fenced in with roses*. They're not fences of thorns, fences that cause us unhappiness. The Jewish nation delights in its Torah. It is proud of these fences. We enjoy the fences of flowers that keep us away from evil, from iniquity, from degradation, from perversion, from falling law, from moral decay. The Jewish nation has remained a pure people solely because they had 'fences of flowers' (Sanhedrin 37a) that the sages of the generations put up between them and between anything that was wrong.

So now we have a new kind of a Torah – the Torah of the *Am Yisroel*. Of course, Hakodosh Boruch Hu approves of it and now

it's His Torah. But actually this Torah came from our nation – the Torah of going beyond the line of duty.

### **Ridiculous Ridicule**

Of course, we were ridiculed for that. We had many enemies just because of that loyalty we demonstrate. First of all, we had the Tzedukim, the Sadducees, at the end of the Bayis Sheini. The Tzedukim constantly showered us with their venom because we added things to the Torah.

The Christians also ridiculed us because of that. The New Testament is full of barbs against the *chachomim* for adding *chumros* to the Torah. It was an objection that was constantly raised by the Nazarene and his followers – that the sages were making difficulties that the Torah didn't require. What happened eventually? In the course of time, the Nazarenes threw away everything. They invented a theory that it's all obsolete and there's a new covenant that did away with the old covenant. Not only the *chumros* of the *chachomim*, but they discarded all the laws of the Torah.

### **The Reformers Go Lost**

And the Reformers did the same. The early ones said certainly you must be decent. Certainly, you have to have good *middos*; decency and morality, no question about it. Certainly, you should keep Shabbos! But so many *chumros* you don't need! We can take away *muktzeh* and some of the prayers, all the *issurei d'rabanan* and everything else like that and just remain with the *isurei d'oraisa*. But Shabbos? Of course, they kept Shabbos.

What happened to them? Eventually they came to America and even those who keep Saturday you understand what it means that they're keeping Saturday. That's the *shitah* of the *yetzer hara*, to yield little by little.

Like the *gemara* (Shabbos 105b) says: *Kach darko shel yetzer hara*, that's the way of the *yetzer hara*. The evil inclination says, "Certainly you have to be a decent Jew. Certainly you have to keep everything. Only that one thing here is not necessary. It's too much." *Hayom omer lo aseh kach*, today he says do this, a little

thing; *u'machar omer lo aseh kach*, the next day a little more. *U'basof*, and finally, *holech veoved avodah zarah*, this man goes and he finally ends up by being an idol worshipper. That's why you have today reformers who are *toeivah* people, reform rabbis who say openly that they practice *mishkav zachar*. You have today a Rabbi Susan who speaks at her temple and tells the congregants that she doesn't believe in G-d.

### **We Don't Give an Inch**

Because after all, from the beginning, their rejection of the nitty-gritty, the smallest details, was actually a symptom of the rot in their *neshamos*. It was a lack of love of Hakodosh Boruch Hu; the love that the *Am Yisroel* demonstrates *davka* by means of being a nation of *chassidim*. Because when you understand that it's all a demonstration of love, that it's all *chavivin divrei sofrim*, so there are no difficulties at all.

And therefore, as much as our enemies ridiculed us and considered it one of our chief faults, that's our greatest virtue. We, *boruch Hashem*, are still clinging to our fences and we're still clinging to the original laws that the fences protected. The loyal people of Hashem don't want to give an inch. We love Hashem too much for such things.

## *Part III. Chosen Nation*

---

### **Hashem is Partial**

And we'll see now that it's a two way street – Hashem loves us back. He's loyal to us too! I'll explain that. In the Torah it states **וַיִּשָׂא** **פְּנֵי** **אֱלֹהִים**, that Hashem is going to be *nosei panim*, He's going to raise up His face toward the *Am Yisroel*.

Now, the expression *nosei panim* needs explanation because after all Hashem's Face is towards everybody; He's looking at everyone all the time. So what does it mean, "He will lift His face towards us"? It means He'll be partial to the *Am Yisroel*; He will favor us more than He favors anybody else.

And this was fulfilled. He favored our nation and that's why we are still around. There are no ancient people that maintain their existence until today – everybody went down underground. The old Greeks are all underground. The old Aztecs, the old idolaters of the Norse Land; nobody remains. All of their culture is underground. Even the language is gone. They don't speak those languages anymore. And one day the great universities and the big impressive cathedrals will collapse too and go underground. They'll be buried by mounds of dirt like all the great temples and palaces of Bavel.

### ***The Unchanged Language***

And who walks on top of them? The Jew is still above ground. Mark Twain once said that. It's interesting; a *goy* said that. He said that “the Jew walks on the graves of his oppressors.” We're still here! There's only one people that persists unchanged; a nation with its culture, with its full integrity; a nation whose language of their sacred books, the words that they use in prayer, is the same language that Dovid Hamelech spoke. We say exactly the same words. We don't pray in English or in German. Exactly the same words that Dovid Hamelech sang on his harp we say every day; *Tehilah leDovid*. We're unchanged.

Now, such a thing couldn't happen by itself – it's a miracle. It's a special partiality that Hakadosh Boruch Hu is showing us to the exclusion of all others. And so, the question arises. If there's an impartial law of history that all nations finally must go under, what's the secret that *Am Yisroel* does not? What is it that gains for the Jewish people this partiality?

### ***The Angels' Kasha***

The *gemara* puts this question into the mouth of the *malachim*: *Amru malachei hashares lefnei Hakadosh Baruch Hu* – The angels say to Hakadosh Baruch Hu – they have a big *kasha*: “Didn't You Yourself say in Your Torah, *asher lo yisa panim*, that You don't show partiality to anybody? So how could you say that *yisa Hashem panav aleicha*, that You'll be partial to the *Am Yisroel*?” That's the

question the *malachim* put to Hashem: “Why is it that for Yisroel You make an exception and You’re *nosei panim*?”

Now listen to what Hakodosh Boruch Hu answers them. *Lo esa lahem panim leYisrael* – Shouldn't I be partial to them? Of course I'm partial to them! Because they're partial to me!

### **Chassidus of Brachos**

“How are they partial to Me?” says Hashem. “Look; I commanded them in the Torah, אָרַץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא בְמִסְכֵּנֹת תֹּאכֵל בָּהּ לֶחֶם, – *When you eat bread, וְשָׂבֵעַתָּה וּבִרְבָּתָה, – and you're satiated, you must say birchas hamazon.* It means that there are two conditions that obligate you in *bentching*. First, it has to be bread and number two it has to be *la'sova*, eaten to satiation.

Now, along comes the Jewish people and they say, “If that's the case, if we see what Hashem wants, why shouldn't we go all out in blessing Hashem? Just because we didn't fill ourselves up, we shouldn't thank Him?” And so, they began to go through the whole business of *birchas hamazon*, of thanking Hashem even if it wasn't *lasova*; even if it was just a small amount!

And they didn't stop there; they said, “Why only *bread*? Potatoes and onions taste good too! We should thank Him for that too! And why only *after* we eat? Once we're at it – once we're trying to show Hashem how much we love Him and how much we want Him to love us – let's bless beforehand too!”

That's what the nation of *chassidim* said and that's how they instituted *Mesichta Brachos*. That's the whole *Mesichta Brachos* – it's all *chassidus*; it's all the *Am Yisroel* going beyond the line of duty. Except for the *halachos* of *kriyas shma*, the *Mesichta Brachos* is almost entirely obligations that the *Am Yisroel* added on because of their love for Hashem. And that's why we say that “*Man d'baye l'mehevei chassida* – If someone wants to be an especially devoted servant of Hashem, *likayem milei d'brachos* – he should fulfill the subject of *brachos*;” because that's what it is, a *Mesichta* of *chassidus*.

## **The Ir Hanidachas Lesson**

And all of that, all of the additional things we do, is a sign of what's doing in our hearts. And so, Hakodosh Boruch Hu says, "You go out of your way to show your love for Me, and that's why I'm going to go out of My way to show My love for you." I will be *nosei panim* to you and you will be the only nation to survive through thick and thin.

And so, we see now the secret of our existence. Our secret is that we are extreme! We demonstrate our love of Hakodosh Boruch Hu by going beyond what is required of us. The *Am Yisroel* learned the lesson of keeping far away even from that little watch lying in the ashes of the *ir hanidachas*; we learned how to turn back the *charon af* of Hashem that ravaged all the nations of the world by being a nation of extremists!

The *Am Yisroel* developed its own genius in furthering the principles of the Torah along the lines of Torah. In every aspect of their lives – national and private – they demonstrated their devotion to Hashem by means of *gezeiros* and *harchakos*. And every generation adds more *chumros* to the previous generations because every generation sees the necessity more and more as the general atmosphere deteriorates. Even in the ancient times when the gentile world was still much more decent, the Jewish people forged ahead because of its love for Hashem.

## **Windstorms in America**

Now, what should we say today when today there is so much corruption in the air? Today when we're more than ever we're surrounded by the wickedness of the gentile world, how much more so do people today who are loyal to the Torah have to add *chumros* upon *chumros*.

I once spoke to a *chaver* of mine, a *Litvak*; a real *Litvak*. He came to America and he put his daughter into Beis Rochel, the Satmar girls' school. I said to him, "What's the matter? A *Litvak* like you sending to a *chassideshe beis yaakov*?" So he said, "The times are different today." And he gave a *mashal*. He said it's like a man who is walking and there's a wind storm; he's afraid he'll be

thrown over so he bends over against the wind in order to maintain his balance.

### **It Wasn't Always So Windy**

And therefore, in a time of stress like today when so many Jews are going lost it's not enough for the good ones to be observant Orthodox Jews. Even if they would be like their fathers or their grandparents who were good people, it's not enough! Because there's a strong wind blowing! You have to bend over or else the strong winds are sure to make you swerve from the path; the winds will knock you down.

And therefore, the small group of devoted ones have to become more devoted than ever! That's us! The *frummeh* today have to become even more devoted. Even things that our forefathers in Europe did not do, today in America we have to do. You cannot congratulate yourself that you're just as good as they were in the 1930s or 1940s. You have to be more extreme than your fathers were, otherwise you can't survive. Things that we did then and we were able to do with impunity, cannot be done today!

It's a different atmosphere today. We have to add more and more because we're being inundated with more and more filth. The more atheism and materialism and *hefkeirus*, and *leitzanus* and *chutzpah* blowing in the streets, the more *harchakos* we have to make.

### **No Soap Radio**

Today, if a young man is marrying a young woman and he says, "Look, on one condition; no radio in our house," so she'll be somewhat surprised because her parents always had a radio. They didn't have a television – that much she understands; television is a sewer that brings all the filth into your home. But a radio?!

But she shouldn't be surprised because today it's different! It's not the same radio! You won't have a clean mind if you have a radio in the home. The things you hear on the radio today are already outrageous things! You hear today on the radio things you wouldn't hear thirty years ago. And therefore we shouldn't be

afraid to speak up and say, “No! We don’t want it! We’re different today!”

### **Aspire For More**

There’s a greatness of character that cannot be demonstrated except by means of going beyond the line of duty, by behaving in a way that’s more than the usual norm of decency. We aspire to a more noble, a more holy life, by being more extreme to the side of righteousness. By means of that, each person on his own, and the entire nation together, find favor in the eyes of Hashem.

And that’s why we’re going to exist forever and ever – because we’re going to follow this system forever and ever. Whatever the *Am Yisroel* gave in their loyalty, they’re getting back with interest. Hakodosh Boruch Hu considers with the greatest love those people who go out of their way to demonstrate their loyalty to Him.

You think it’s just for nothing that we’re still around despite all the attempts that they made that we shouldn’t be around anymore?! And we’ll continue to exist long after the great nations have disappeared! It’s only because of one factor! Because we’re loyal to Him and we go out of our way to be sure that “not even the smallest of all wickedness should stick to our hands,” therefore, “the *charon af* of Hashem is turned away from us ... and He is merciful to us and He increases us” (Re’eh 13:18). That’s why we’re still around and that’s why we’ll be around forever and ever.

### **Have A Wonderful Shabbos**

————— **This week’s booklet is based on tapes:** —————

**393** - Why Hashem Favors Israel | **495** - The Nazir

**584** - Beyond The Line Of Duty | **780** - The Night Of The Locked Doors

**Listen: 718.289.0899** Press 1 for English and 2 for Thursday Night Lectures

# OUR SPONSORS

## **Sefer Vayikra - 5780**

THE **CHOPP HOLDINGS** EDITION

AS A ZECHUS FOR KLAL YISROEL  
DURING THIS GLOBAL PANDEMIC

## **Sefer Bamidbar - 5780**

THE **RAHMANI FAMILY** EDITION

FOR THE HATZLACHA, HEALTH, AND HAPPINESS  
OF OUR FAMILY AND ALL KLAL YISROEL

## **Sefer Devarim - 5780**

THE **PENSON FAMILY** EDITION

IN MEMORY OF MENDEL BEN MENDEL A"H

## **Sefer Bereishis - 5781**

THE **CHOPP HOLDINGS** EDITION

IN HONOR OF OUR  
CHOPP AND STERN GRANDPARENTS

## **Sefer Shemos - 5781**

Available

## **עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה - נדיבי עם המתנדבים בקביעות**

נתן ניסים בן רחל לרפואה שלימה

לזכות שושנה רייזא בת חיה מלכה

לזכות נתן יוסף בן תמר חיה ודבורה בת מלכה

לזכות גאלרא בת דבורה, משה בן דבורה, שושנה רייזא בת דבורה

In honor of my father and his "Rebbe's Mussar Stories" ([mussarstories.com](http://mussarstories.com))

לע"נ פסח בן גרשון ושרה בת משה

לזכות שאול בן חיה עלא

לזכות יוחנן בן שרה חיה ורחל בת מרים

IN APPRECIATION  
OF OUR PAST AND CURRENT PARSHA SPONSORS

**במבר**

לעי"נ הרה"צ מוהר"ר צבי  
בה"ר חיים זצ"ל שטערן

**בהר-בחקותי**

Moishy and Ornella  
Wolhendler

**אמור**

In honor of  
Rabbi Horowitz

**בהעלותך**

לעי"נ מנחם בן משומר  
ומרים למשפחת מנחם

**נשא**

The  
Drew Family

**שבועות**

לז"נ הרה"ח ר' אברהם ב"ר  
משה יוסף ע"ה שפיגלמאן

**חקת-בלק**



**קרח**

Dr. Yehoshuah Canter  
and Family

**שלח**

לע"נ מרת פאגלא ב"ר ישראל ע"ה  
לע"נ בראנדל ב"ר משה דוד ע"ה

**דברים**

The Rosenberg  
Family

**מטות-מסעי**



**פינחס**

לע"נ גאלדא פעסיל  
בת ר' נח צבי ע"ה

**ראה**

The Safdeye Family

**עקב**

Anonymous

**ואתחנן**



**כי תבא**

Anonymous

**כי תצא**

The Jaffa Family

**שופטים**



**האזינו - שובה**

Available

**ראש השנה**

Available

**נצבים - וילך**

Available

**נח**

Available

**בראשית**

Available

**סוכות**

Available

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

שאל אביך ויגדך זקניך ויאמרו לך

Q:

**My husband loves to learn but I want him to take a vacation. But he tells me that his vacation is to be able to sit and learn. What should I do?**

A:

You should believe him. When a person is wasting his time making a living and his heart hurts him that he's not able to learn at that time, and now he has a vacation, so let him sit and learn. Why do you have to travel around – to go to the mountains and to get tired and worn out? And you'll be uncomfortable there too. At home he has his *beis hamedrash* and his *seforim*; he has all his conveniences at home. He wants to sit and learn so let him enjoy his life and sit and learn.

Some people never rest; they waste their lives. I one time had a man in my shul, a wealthy man, so he went for a vacation to the mountains. And in the mountains he decided he needs a vacation from the mountains so he went to Switzerland. These people are never at rest. They think traveling is a good time. Traveling is nothing but discomfort. If you're home, then *ashrei yoshvei veisecha*, you're happier at home than any place else.

Today wherever you go in the mountains there are ticks in the fields and in the grass. Tick disease; many people are suffering from that today. And accidents happen *chalilah* every summer; things that wouldn't have happened in the city. Every summer tragedies happen in the country to children and to people; things that wouldn't happen in the city.

So we say, *ashrei yoshvei vei'secha* – you're lucky if you stay home. Now, I know you won't listen to me, but I'm saying it anyhow.

TAPE # E-66

This week's Q&A sponsored:

נתנדב ע"י הב"ש לזכות הצלחת ילדיו בתורה ויר"ש