



פרשת ואתחנן

WITH

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BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

Repeating Great Truths

Contents:

Part I. Reviewing Torah - 1

Part II. Reviewing Shabbos - 4

Part III. Reviewing Forever - 7

Part I. Reviewing Torah

Over and Over and Over

Friends, I'd like to speak with you tonight about a *possuk* that we say every day. Every day in our Shema proclamation we say the words וְשִׁנְנֶתֶם לְבָנֵיךָ (Vaeschanan 6:7). Now the word וְשִׁנְנֶתֶם has a number of meanings but the most simple one is 'You shall repeat them to your children'; it comes from the word שָׁנַי. *Sheini* means twice, and so וְשִׁנְנֶתֶם translates as 'you should repeat them.' Some translations say, 'Teach them diligently'. It means to go over and over and over. Now, *shinun* – review and repetition, that's going to be our subject tonight, but first a preface.

In Mesichta Eirubin (54b), Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah quotes the following *possuk* from Mishlei: לֹא יִחַרֵּךְ רְמִיָּה צִידוֹ – *A deceitful man will not scorch his catch* (12:27). It's talking about a person who went hunting for some kosher birds and finally he netted a catch. And now he's thinking about how good of a supper he's going to have later; how he's going to

shecht his catch and then make a fire and hold the bird on a stick over the fire to broil it.

Did you ever eat a roasted pigeon? It's delectable. And it tastes especially good right off the fire. That's what the hunter is imagining – he'll sit by the campfire and enjoy fresh roasted fowl, reaping the benefits of his hard work.

The Deceitful Hunter

But Mishlei tells us that this man, the deceitful hunter, goes to sleep hungry. What's the story? Why can't he eat his bird? Because as soon as he trapped his first bird, he dropped it into his basket and he went back to hunting. Now, hunters have a little knack; they know where to break a little something in the wing, a harmless thing that prevents the bird from flying; or they know how to tuck one wing under the other in such a way that it is secured. But instead of doing that, this hunter just put it into his basket and went back to his fowling. And so when he returns at the end of the day to broil his bird and eat supper he discovers that it didn't wait for him;

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it's gone. And that's why לֹא יִחַרְךָ – he won't be able to scorch it.

Now it's important to know what kind of catch Mishlei is talking about. Shlomo Hamelech is not giving advice to fowlers after all; he didn't write Mishlei for bird-hunters. And so Rabbi Elazar says like this; he makes a play on words so that we should understand the real meaning of the possuk: לֹא יִחַרְךָ – 'He won't scorch his catch' means לֹא יִחַיָה – he won't live, וְלֹא יֵאָרִיךְ יָמָיו – and he won't have long days, צֶדֶק הַרְמָאִי – if he's a deceitful hunter.

Now, it's interesting that this is all he says and the Gemara takes it for granted that everybody knows what he is talking about. He didn't say the word 'Torah' even once but it was immediately understood. It would be superfluous to say anything more because what other birds are there to catch in this world? There is one catch, that's *Toras Hashem*. בִּי הֵם חַיֵּינוּ – that is the purpose of our lives.

The Deceitful Lamdan

And so we'll go back to our *possuk* now and learn it again, this time with the *pshat* that Shlomo intended: "Someone who is hunting Torah but he doesn't make sure to secure his catch, so because he's a deceitful hunter he won't enjoy his catch."

Now, right away we have the right to ask a question. Because if it would say, 'A careless man won't broil his catch' or maybe 'a reckless man,' – he is in such a hurry to go ahead and get more so he didn't take care to make sure that what he had would remain with him – OK, we'd understand that. Like Rashi says there, he's a plain *shoteh*. If you accomplish something in this world and in your carelessness you let it evaporate, you are nothing but a fool. But it doesn't say 'careless' or 'foolish.' It calls him *deceitful*.

And so we'll explain it as follows. When you discover a *din* you never learned before or when you learn a line in the Gemara or the Mesillas Yesharim, or if you studied a *possuk* in the Chumash or any idea you found in a Torah *sefer*, it is a great acquisition – it's like catching a bird that one day

might be a delectable course at your dinner table. In this world and the Next World that Torah thought, when it becomes part of your personality, would support you wherever you go.

Only that what happens? Most people enjoy being tickled with a new idea, a new thought, and that's enough for them. But to put effort into acquiring it – to tie up the bird and settle it into the basket – that it should become part of your mind, part of your personality, that's already another story. And so the deceitful hunter comforts himself with the thought that he already caught the bird and that's all that's required.

Easy Come, Easy Go

And so Mishlei warns us, 'A deceitful man,' it means a man who is not honest with himself, 'is not going to enjoy his catch'. Why? Because he doesn't make sure that it remains with him. He says "Ah! I learned it and now I already know it" and he doesn't go back to make sure that he actually *does* know it.

And then by the time he is ready to recollect, to make use of that information, it has already flown the coop; it's not in his head anymore. "What was it I learned in that *sefer* the other day?" Or, "What was that Torah thought I heard from the Rabbi?" And even if it's still there, it's there in a pale way; it doesn't mean anything to him. It could be he understood it at the moment and it made a little impression then but now it evaporates. By means of deceiving himself, he loses everything.

There are people who are ambitious to swallow the whole *yam haTalmud* and they think if they will gulp down everything quickly they will become big Torah scholars. So they have to know as quickly as it comes that is how fast it is going to depart. Like they say, 'Easy come, easy go.'

Cherish Your Gems

We're learning now that you must always review your Torah learning. When you learn one line of something new in the Torah, something you never learned before, it is a great acquisition, a diamond. Mishlei says 'bird' because of how easily it can

escape, but actually it's more valuable than a flawless gem. And you must do everything you can to keep that gem, to make sure it doesn't go lost.

That what the Chachomim say, הַלּוֹמֵד וְאֵינוֹ חוֹזֵר – if you learn and don't review, כְּזוֹרֵעַ וְאֵינוֹ קוֹצֵר – it is like planting seeds and not reaping (Sanhedrin 99a). We are plowing the ground and planting seeds – learning Gemara is like plowing the hard earth – and then when the crop is already fully grown and waiting to be reaped, nobody comes to gather it in. Because he's already tickling himself with something new.

Torah is Life

Now, some people will say that they're not in the planting business anyhow; here's a man listening to this tape and when he hears this subject he's already tuning himself out. He thinks it doesn't apply to him because he's not learning too much anyhow. "I'm not a Gemara buff," he says.

That's a big mistake! Gemara is not a hobby. We learn Gemara because that is the air we breathe. Jews always knew this! You must breathe Gemara. That's our life! Everyone must aspire to greatness in Torah! And therefore even if you haven't done much yet, you have to get busy planting. Maybe you won't have a big field but at least you should have a little flower pot on the window sill; at least something you must have. And you should start planting in that pot – even if it's not too much – because that is the purpose of life.

And ladies, you too, you shouldn't feel that you are left out in the cold because you are soon going to hear there is a lot for ladies to plant and a lot to reap – we'll soon come to that. We'll soon see that there are bigger principles to internalize than learning Gemara. But right now we're talking about Gemara because to the Torah nation this is one of the most important hunts. Every Jew should be in the hunt for knowing Shas.

Learning on Shabbos

That's why you have to be very busy on Shabbosim. Shabbos morning, before the *davenen*

you can get in an hour. Friday nights, four hours. Shabbos night is a gold mine. That's what they did in Slabodka; four hours on the long Friday winter nights. And later, three hours, and then two hours. And the long Shabbos afternoons in the summertime – four hours – why not?

I remember a man, today he is an old *mashgiach* in a very big yeshiva, he used to learn all day Shabbos afternoon. And he reviewed sometimes six *blatt gemara Rashi* and *Tosfos*, six *blatt*. Today he is an elderly *mashgiach* in one of the biggest *yeshivos* in the world. But I recall; he used to sit all day long and review. Because that is what Shabbos is for.

Now, if you are a person who is going to deceive yourself with a happy feeling that you accomplish so much, and you are not interested in seeing if you actually have it – "I learned through a *mesichta*!" Or "I learned through a *perek*", or whatever it is you say you learned through. But do you have it? Many times a person has the impression that he acquired a piece of the Torah, but later on he comes back to it and he sees that it's all new. And that's a frustration of the purpose of the Torah because it never became part of his mindset. And the more dishonest a man is with himself, the more he is going to frustrate his purpose in this world.

Creating a Torah Mind

And so now we come back to Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah and we can understand a little better how he explained the words of Mishlei. What does it mean לֹא יִחַרְךָ, that he won't roast his catch? It means לֹא יִחַיָּה, he won't live, וְלֹא יִצְרִיךָ יָמִים, and he won't merit long days in this world.

Not to live?! How does Rabbi Elazar come to that? It's a play on words but Rabbi Elazar is telling us that it's included in the words of the *possuk*. How does he see that? Because once you understand that we're talking here not about hunting birds but hunting for a Torah mind, it's a much more serious subject!

Because what is the purpose of asking Hakadosh Baruch Hu that He should give us additional years?

The purpose of life is **כִּי הֵם חַיֵּינוּ** – the Torah is our life. We're here to create a Torah mind and so Hakadosh Baruch Hu is willing to lay out for us another year – but He wants to know what will be the purpose.

So when a man is a **רִמָּאי** – a deceitful man who learns superficially; he's acquiring all of his Torah knowledge and Torah ideals and attitudes in a superficial way, so **לֹא יִחְזֶקָה** – the end will be he won't deserve to live. When he'll come again on Rosh Hashanah to the president of the bank and ask for another loan, this time the president will say, "Look, I advanced so many loans to you but I am not getting anything in return." Someday He might turn him down.

Part II. Reviewing Shabbos

Your Inner Child

And now we understand that commandment in our Parshah – the command to repeat the Torah diligently to our children – a little better. It means that whatever we're going to accomplish in *ruchniyus*, it's only going to become a permanent accomplishment by means of repetition. Repeating the great concepts will create a Torah mind for your children over the course of time.

And while you are talking and repeating to your children, you should make sure to listen in too. And even if you don't have any children or they're not around, *you* are your most important child for whom you have to create a Torah mind.

And what's lesson number one when you want to make a Torah mind? Repetition! When you talk to yourself or to your children or your students about the ideals of our nation – when you talk about the Almighty Who created the world or about how our forefathers were taken out of Egypt with miracles, when you talk about the great event when our nation stood at Mount Sinai and heard the voice of Hashem speaking to them, or about *Olam Haba* and *Techiyas Hameisim* or the thousands of other Torah

ideals, the first rule is **וְשָׁנַנְתֶּם** – you have to *repeat* it to them.

The Lion and the Tiger

Now this goes against the grain because once we heard about the creation of the world – that is when we were five years old and we toddled into Hebrew school and our rebbe told it to us – from then on it's already trite and we don't want to hear about it. We imagine there's nothing more to gain. We know all about it – at the age of five we heard this subject already.

And that is why there are Jews who are fifty-five who come in the synagogue and when somebody proposes to speak on this subject of the creation of the world or Matan Torah or something else, so they are bored. They want to hear something new, something mystical, *sisrei Torah*, because those boring subjects, they know all about it. It's enough already.

And therefore this principle in our Parshah tells us that you can never repeat great ideas enough – being bored with what you once heard is only a sign of extreme shallowness. It's like a rabbi once told me; he said that he can never speak twice using a parable of a lion. If there is a lion in the story he can't use it again because people have heard about the lion already. Even if it is an entirely different story, no connection, he has to change it to a tiger or some other animal. People are half asleep, waiting for the services to be over so they can make *kiddush*, and in their slumber they heard the rabbi say something about a lion; so next time he talks about a lion again, they're bored stiff: "He's repeating the same old stuff," they say.

Bring it Back

And that is how people are; when they hear a profound idea – the truth is that even the first time they didn't understand it; it didn't penetrate too far – now they are already bored. And the entire purpose goes lost because the idea is not to hear it, but to assimilate it, to make it part of your permanent

mindset, and that only happens by means of *v'shinantam*.

Now that's what it says in another *possuk* in our *parshah* (4:39) – we say it every day in our *davening*. It states וַיִּדְעַתְּ הַיּוֹם – *You should know today ... that ה' הוא האֱלֹהִים* – *Hashem is the Almighty*. But it says something more than that. It says 'You should know it today' and then it adds וְהֵשַׁבְתָּ אֶל לִבְבְּךָ – *and you should bring it back to your heart*.

What does it mean to 'bring it back to your heart'? I just said וַיִּדְעַתְּ, that you know it already. So what's this business about וְהֵשַׁבְתָּ אֶל לִבְבְּךָ, about bringing it back to your heart?

The answer is that even though you said it once, take it back again into your mind and think it over. And then again; each time, think about it more: הַשֵּׁם הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים – *Hashem is the Elokim*.

The Never Ending Hunt

So a simple Jew hears this and he doesn't understand what I'm talking about. "How much is there to think on הַשֵּׁם הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים already? There is one Hashem; there is no trinity, there is no pantheon, there is no buddha and whatever other garbage they come up with. There is nothing in the world except Hashem. Ok, I'm done hunting. I caught the bird."

No. It says וְהֵשַׁבְתָּ אֶל לִבְבְּךָ. Keep taking it back into your mind. The same thing! Think about the words again and again. Each time you say שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל – *שמע ישראל* – it's repetition, it is nothing but repetition. But that's everything! Repetition is what makes the mind.

The Chovos Halevavos says הַמְחֻשָּׁבָה נִמְשָׁכֶת אַחֲרָי – *Your mind follows your words*. Do you hear that important principle? Your mind follows your words! It means if you say the right words enough times – and you're thinking into the words – then your mind changes. The more you say the same words again and again the more your mind becomes influenced by these words.

The Siyum

That's why the Am Yisroel lives by repetition. Our whole system of Judaism is repetition. When we finished this week *Mesichta Kesubos* in the shul, you remember what we said? הִרְרַן עֲלֵךְ – *We promise we are coming back to you; we are not finished*, הִרְרַן עֲלֵךְ מִסְכָּתָא כְּתוּבָת – *You precious friend Kesubos, you beloved Mesichta Kesubos, we have put so many hours into you and we're so happy with our accomplishment that we finished a whole mesichta but we are not saying farewell to you; we are coming back*.

And soon, on *Simchas Torah* we'll be finishing the whole Torah. A big happiness! We finished all the *parshiyos*! So what are we going to do now? Maybe something new, something novel we never saw before? No, it's *Bereishis* all over again.

Bereishis again?! How many times can we do that? The answer is it's never enough! As many times as we're still breathing in this world we'll repeat it because each time we read the words – if we think about them – we carve them deeper and deeper into our minds.

Dancing ... Again!

Even the dancing and singing on *Simchas Torah* is a story of repetition. Now, most people don't know this and so the day becomes a wasted opportunity. But actually that's the purpose of going around and around repeating the same words again and again. Let's say they're singing תִּצַּא תוֹרָה – *כי מציון תצא תורה*. It's a pity; it's a waste of time. A whole morning of repetition?! Maybe you should learn *Mishnah Berurah* or some other *sefer* during that time – you could accomplish so much. No; it doesn't have to be a waste. The fact that you're repeating the words should be utilized by you.

Each time you say it you're thinking 'From Tzion someday will come forth the Torah' (*Yeshaya 2:3*). And each time, you say it with more conviction, with the intention that it should be deeper and deeper impressed into your *neshamah* that a time will come when the Torah will come out of Tzion.

You'll see what's going to happen one day. It will be tremendous! A whole torrent of Torah will flow out of Tzion, and the *dvar Hashem* will come forth from Yerushalayim to the whole world.

Same thing when we sing אָנָּא עֲבָדָא דְקִדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא; that's the national anthem of the Jewish people. 'I am a servant of Hashem.' Now it doesn't mean he's an *eved Hashem* yet. But he's saying it again and again, אָנָּא, אָנָּא, אָנָּא. "I want to be loyal to You, Hashem. I'll think about You as much as possible. I'll serve you as much as possible."

Singing ... Again!

So you say the words again and again. Again and again. Again and again you say the words. Not because you want to hear the *niggun* again; not because you want to maintain the tune. No, you want to maintain the words! You want to maintain the ideas! You want to put those words into your mind; you want it to go in so deep that you become a new personality.

All those songs which are *shirei kodesh* – you have to get those words into your head. That's why it's not good to have a *niggun* without words. No, it should be with words. And you say the words over and over again. And each time, as you walk and stamp and dance, you're stamping the words into your heart. With each stamp, you bang it into your heart deeper and deeper. That's the way to celebrate the Yom Tov – with repetition – so that when Simchas Torah is over, you're not just tired and worn out; you're also not the same person anymore!

That's why I say it's a beautiful *minhag* that some people have to say the Ani Maamins every day. Now, others might think, "Why every day? I said it once and I believe it." It's a good question – maybe the bar mitzvah boy should say it once at his bar mitzvah and finished. He accepted it once so why keep repeating it?

Emunah ... Again!

The answer is that it's not a matter of signing on the dotted line that you believe something; it's a matter of making it part of who you are. *Emunah* in

the beginning is like a very thin layer of paint – if you give a little scrape, the paint comes right off. But we're in this world to get an *emunah* that's thicker than that. And therefore it's a matter of repeating the foundations of truth in order that each time we say it – if we say it properly – we're adding another layer of paint each time. Each time we're making it more and more clear to ourselves. And if you say it a thousand times you're making a much deeper impression than saying it just once – even if you believed it the first time. It makes a tremendous difference in a person's mind.

That's why it is so important to repeat the same *kriyas shema* every day. And the same *tefillos*. Every time you say it you are making it more and more deeply engrained into your mind. Every word in the davening is a goldmine for changing your personality.

When you come to the second *bracha* in Shemona Esrei – I'm just saying an example – you say וְנֶאֱמַן אֶתְּהָ לְהַחְיִית מְתִים – I trust You, Hashem, You will revive the dead. That's one of the thirteen *yesodos* of our *emunah*, that the soul will be placed back into this body of flesh and blood. Now, I'm sorry to say – please be *moichel* me if I'm wrong – but almost nobody thinks what they're saying. But that's frustrating the plan of *tefillah*; the purpose of the repetition is so that you'll think about it again and again until you become a *maamin*.

Coming Alive ... Again!

You have to train yourself to believe it. You'll say it by Shacharis and by Minchah and by Maariv again. And tomorrow you start the same business again. Again and again, וְנֶאֱמַן אֶתְּהָ – I trust You, Hashem, לְהַחְיִית מְתִים – I trust You, Hashem!

If you want, you can say it twice; there's no *issur* to repeat it. Because there's no question about it you're changing yourself every time you say it. Every day you hammer it in a little bit more until little by little, it starts becoming actual in your mind. It becomes real – you're beginning to believe in *techiyas hameisim*,

That's the great program of repeating the great truths over and over again. Instead of every day wanting to say something new, *chiddushim*; No! Repeat the same thing again and again, and spend your time impressing upon your *neshamah* the great truths of the Torah. When you repeat an idea over and over again it becomes part of your personality. And that's the great Torah secret of וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם – you shall repeat them diligently again and again.

Part III. Reviewing Forever

The Repetitious Holiday

Now, once we learned this golden rule of וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם, let's take it a step further and talk about putting it into practice in a different way; let's talk about Shabbos. Shabbos is the day, more than any other day in the Jewish calendar, that we repeat again and again. And that's because Shabbos is the day, more than any other, for acquiring a Torah mind by means of repetition.

Imagine that you are getting ready now to make *kiddush* on Friday night. Your family is assembled around the table and you are holding the goblet of wine. And because you're a nervy fellow, you are gutsy and original, so you say, "Children, you know what we are going to do now?"

So your children look at you funny. "Oh no," they're thinking, "not this again."

"Totty, we're making *kiddush*."

"But do you know what *kiddush* is about? *Kiddush* is about the Creation of the world!"

Not Again, Ta!

They heard it a hundred times already. That's what they're thinking. So, a hundred and one times tell them. Let them hear it again! Because if a hundred times didn't impress them enough that they want to hear it again, then it is not enough. You have to be thirsty to hear *kiddush* again. That's how important of an event it is.

The Gemara says that when you come home Friday night so before you make *kiddush* you have to say *Vayechulu*. וַיְכַלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל צְבָאָם. You are making that statement, an announcement, that the world was finished in seven days.

Now you say it every week and you've been hearing it even before you had your own house, from your father who said it every week. There is nothing new here it seems; you are not adding a single word – it is exactly the same. But we'll see now that it's not.

Hidden Angels

The Gemara says בְּשַׁעֲרֵה שְׂאוֹמֵר וַיְכַלּוּ בָאִים שְׁנֵי מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁרָת – at the time when a man says *Vayechulu* two angels come. Isn't that a good idea to think about when you are getting up to say *kiddush*? Two *malachim* just slipped in. You don't see them; they know how to do it in such a way that you shouldn't see them. But they're standing there.

And our Sages tell us that these angels put their hands on your head. Now, nobody should grin – we have to take this seriously; it is very important. When the *malachim* see that you are saying *vayechulu* they put their hands on your head and they are giving you a blessing.

And they are giving you some blessing. They say, וְסָר עֲוֹנֶךָ וְהִטָּאתְךָ תִּכָּפֵר – "Your sin is departing and your iniquities are wiped out." You didn't know about that? A glorious opportunity to wipe out your sins! Of course, it can't be better than Yom Kippur; Yom Kippur also wipes out your sins but you have to repent.

Time for Introspection

So before we say *vayechulu* now we have an idea what to do. We should be *meharer b'teshuvah*. Isn't that a good idea? Before you make *kiddush* – the family is chattering and your wife is bringing in some more things on the table, and nobody is thinking about doing *teshuvah*, but you; you're sitting there for a moment and you're thinking of something wrong that you did.

It's not so hard to find. It doesn't have to be something new every week; think of the same thing two, three weeks. Sometimes it's so serious you can think about it for years and years every time you make *kiddush*. You regret that you did it; that's teshuva – you regret that you did it and you're thinking of ways to make sure you don't repeat that sin. So now when you stand up to say *Vayechulu*, you are utilizing that great opportunity for achieving atonement. Kiddush becomes now a Yom Kippur for you – you're forgiven.

The question is why do you deserve it? Are you saying something original? What's new about it? You said it last week too. Your whole family is a scholarly family; all the children go to *yeshivos*, the girls go to Beis Yaakov – they all know the words by memory. So what are you telling them?

The answer is what we're talking about tonight. Repetition of great ideas is priceless! You can never say a great idea once too much. *And this is the greatest of ideas!* You are saying here that the whole universe came into being at the Word of Hashem. Forget about certain molecules coming together. That's good for a high school boy, for superficial people. On Shabbos we're talking about the One who made the molecules.

The Great Creation

A molecule is a very complicated business; an atom is extremely complicated. An atom is a whole system of electrical circuits and it operates in an orbit, and orbits within orbits. You see pictures, models, of an atom. It's tremendously complicated. And even that is a simplified version. They once thought they knew what the nucleus is but now they discovered that the nucleus is a whole new kind of secret; it's more complicated than they ever dreamed.

So how did all this happen? Where did it come from?

So you get up now on Friday night to make the big announcement. And it is such a great announcement that you just can't say it with mere

words—you have to make a proclamation over a goblet of wine. So you pick up the wine and you say, "Listen my children! וַיְכַלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ. He made everything! From His own imagination He caused this great universe – that is so complicated in every detail – to come into being."

"But we said it last week," your children are thinking, "so how much originality can we add this week?" You need a microscope to detect the amount that you added this week to what you thought last week. But there is a difference. Repetition makes a difference! Repetition turns simple things into gold.

"And therefore my children," you say, "for the thousandth time and the ten thousandth time; and if you will hear it a billion times you still won't understand it because it's so profound; all your lives and the lives of your progeny forever can be spent in studying this and you will never come to the bottom of it, to the depths of this truth how Hashem made everything from nothing.

The Moment of Forgiveness

That's why we say *Vayechulu* every Friday night. And that's why we say it three times every Friday night! Because each time is another layer of *emunah*. And the *malachim* appreciate that and they come forward and put their hands on your head and they say, "This is a great moment for you my friend. You don't know how lucky you are. You just acquired another little bit of *daas*, a little bit more of a Torah mind. And therefore you deserve to have your sins forgiven." Now, some sins will need the help of Yom Kippur too, but they will put it on the conveyor belt and convey it for Yom Kippur; it is already on the way.

You have learned a great thing tonight. Next time you hear *kiddush* – you don't have to be the father of the house; even a child who is listening – prepare yourself.

So while your brothers and sisters are frolicking, think for a moment about the words that you're about to hear – the tremendous principle of *Maaseh Bereishis Yeish Mei'ayin*. And the *malachim* will put

their hands on your head too because you are listening; you are *yotzei kiddush*.

And once you get started, once you've learned this lesson of repeating the great truths of Shabbos, so it's not merely *kiddush* – the entire Shabbos is transformed into a goldmine of opportunities. You know, that's what the Shabbos *seudos* are for; the real purpose of *oneg Shabbos* is to get you into a good mood, to be more energetic and enthusiastic about activating your mind to repeat the great lessons of Shabbos.

The Great Lessons

So while you're chewing the first bite of *challah*, your mind is chewing over again the most important truth, the first principle of the Torah, Bereishis bara Elokim. You're thinking, "You, Hashem, made the world out of nothing. Before, nothing existed, not even energy particles. No chemicals at all. You, Hashem, by Your command caused everything to come into being. The entire nature was created only by Your wish."

But you don't stop there. You can do it on the second *kezayis* too if you want. "I'm eating for the purpose of celebrating *briyas ha'oilam yeish mei'ayin*. There's no walls, there's no ceiling, there's no floor, there's no sky, there's no earth. It's only Hashem's Word."

Don't think it's boring. The more you review these ideas, it becomes sweeter and sweeter in your mouth. And you'll be amazed at what it does to you. You'll find that you're changing, every bite, every thought, you're becoming a new person. After a while you have a Shabbos mind – even on Sunday and Monday and all week long, your mind is a Shabbos mind, a Torah mind.

Career of Preparation

Now, all this repetition – that's the life of a loyal *frum Jew* – is the best preparation for the Next World. Because the more of a Torah mind you create for yourself in this world, the more you'll reap the benefits of that acquisition in the World to Come.

What's going to be in the next world? About the Olam Haba it says, **וְאָמַר בְּיוֹם הַהוּא** – He is going to say on that day. Who is going to say? Anybody who will be around – not everybody will be there but those who will be around will say on that day. **הִנֵּה אֵלֵינוּ זֶה** – “Behold this is our G-d, **קִוִּינוּ לוֹ וְיִוִּשְׁעֵנו** – we hoped to Him and He saved us, He helped us. **זֶה ה' קִוִּינוּ לוֹ** – this is Hashem to whom we hoped, **וְנִשְׂמְחָה בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ** – let us rejoice and let us be happy in His salvation.

Now listen what the Gemara (Taanis 31a) says about this verse. **אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר** – Rabbi Elazar said, **עַתִּיד הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לַעֲשׂוֹת מְחוּל לְצַדִּיקִים** – In the time to come Hakadosh Baruch Hu will make a ring dance for the righteous. Pay attention to that – a ring dance. Why a ring dance? You know, there is such a thing as a single-file dance. But a single file dance comes to an end; sooner or later you come to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean and you can't go any further. A ring dance however goes around in a circle and so it goes on and on forever. It means that in Olam Haba will be a dance that will never end.

Pointing Him Out

Who are we dancing around? **וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בֵּינֵיהֶם בְּגֵן עֵדֶן** – Hakadosh Baruch Hu is sitting in the middle and we are dancing around Him. **וְכָל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד מֵרְאֵהוּ בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ** – and everybody will point with his finger to Hashem and he going to say these words: “This is Hashem!”

In this world we talk about Hashem but we can't say where He is – He is everywhere but everywhere doesn't mean you can point it out. But when the World to Come will arrive we are going to be able to see Hakadosh Baruch Hu to our heart's content.

Now, the first time around, it's going to be tremendous happiness. To see Hashem?! There's no greater happiness! But each time they go around they are seeing more. They went around once and they saw Him the first time. Then they go around a second time, this time they recognize Him even more. It's the same circle but each time they repeat this dance around Him they see more and more.

And that is the picture we are given of what is going to happen to the people who are busy repeating the great Torah ideals in this world. The great ideas, *never* weary of them. And repeat them constantly in this life and the time will come when we will enjoy that in that ring dance that will last forever. And we are going to say the first time Elokeinu and the second time Hashem and the third time I can't tell you and the fourth time I surely can't tell you, and it will go on and on forever, greater and greater and it will be a happiness that is endless. *בְּיָשׁוּעָתוֹ וּבְשִׂמְחָתוֹ* – *we are going to rejoice and be happy* בְּיָשׁוּעָתוֹ.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos

LET'S GET PRACTICAL

Career of Repetition

The command in our Parshah that we repeat the Torah Truths to our children teaches us the great principle of always reviewing Torah principles. Only by means of constant repetition can we make these great principles part of our personalities, so that it becomes etched into our souls for the World to Come. This week I will try to repeat the great Torah Truths to my family constantly. Additionally I will *bli neder* repeat the words *וּבְיָמֵינוּ אֵתָהּ* וּבְיָמֵינוּ אֵתָהּ when I recite the Shemonah Esrei, having in mind thereby to acquire real tangible belief in *techiyas hameisim*, as well as practicing repetition for the rest of the day.

This week's booklet is based on tapes:

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Is there a problem with taking children to concerts where *shomrei Torah u'mitzvos* will be singing kosher songs?



I will tell you my private opinion. I don't think that children should become accustomed to unnecessary and superfluous things. Don't train your children to become accustomed to going places that cost money. They don't need it and you're ruining them in the process. You can train them to take walks. They can take walks and get fresh air. They could play a little in the street with a ball and get some exercise, but don't take them to concerts and things like that. I don't believe in that at all.

I don't believe in taking children to travel at all. Don't get them accustomed to luxuries. A child should be taught how to live a frugal life and to desire only what is necessary. Today, people are feeding children all kinds of ideas – all kinds of wrong ideas. And people think it's normal. Even to send your daughter to Seminary in, let's say, Gateshead, I don't believe in it anymore. It's a very good place, Gateshead, but send your daughter to Boro Park or to Yeshiva of Brooklyn. There are very good places here.

And don't let your daughter travel to Eretz Yisroel either. A man approached me the other day. His daughter wants to go to Eretz Yisroel. She's a frum girl. He wants to know what I think about it. What does she have to go to Eretz Yisroel for?! It costs a lot of money to go to Eretz Yisroel. What does she have to go to Eretz Yisroel for?! An unmarried girl should waste money on going to Eretz Yisroel?! No, I don't believe in these things.

Teach your children to save their money. They'll need it someday. A bank account is better than traveling – a savings account in a bank. Teach them to save money for themselves. And you want to train them to spend money on unnecessary things?! No, I disapprove of that.

TAPE # E-217 (December 1999)