PARSHAS KI TEITZEI

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Shiur Presented in

Ki Seitzei - Did You Pack Your Shovel?

ELUL - FIND YOUR SELF

The *sefer Leket Yosher* in *Hilchos Yemei Slichos* says that Elul comes from the language of *chipus*, to investigate, to search. That is a *chiddush*. He says where do we get that source that Elul means *chipus*? It comes from the words of the Targum in *Parshas Shelach*. Over there it says, ויתורו את ארץ כנען, go and tour, investigate the land of Canaan, Eretz Yisrael (Bamidbar 13:2). If you take a look in the Targum, he says, ויאללון ית ארעא דכנען. So you see the word Elul, it's not a Hebrew word. It's more of an Aramaic word. It relates to the idea of investigating.

Now, *pashtus*, what do you investigate in Elul? A person should look at his sins. He should look at his sins and shortcomings in order to be able to do *viduy* and do *teshuvah*.

But some of the *gedolei hamussar* explain that the *avodas ha'adam*, the work of a person in Elul, is to delve into his inner self, so that he should get into the deepest recesses of himself, and he should get in touch with his true will. Every Yid, in his *toch*, *toch*, deepest inner self, wants to do the right thing, but it's very deep inside. The *gedolei hamussar* say that in Elul, a person should get in touch with his true inner desire where he's pure, where sin and *tumah* does not reach. This storehouse of one's inner self usually gets covered up over the year with "dust" and with all other kinds of things. In Elul, our job is to bring out the true I, the true inner self from within the deepest recess of ourselves.

Parshas Ki Seitzei always comes out in Elul. In *Parshas Ki Seitzei* it talks about many, many *mitzvos*. It talks about the good in a person. It talks about the bad in a person. Today, we want to share with you something from this *parshah* that you could take with you.

A JEW IN WAR

Further, in *perek* כג, it says: כי תצא מחנה על אויביך, when your army goes out to do battle with your enemies, ונשמרת מכל דבר רע, you should be careful and watch yourself from all *davar ra* (Devarim 23:10). Now the question is, is it only when you go out to war that you have to be careful מכל דבר רע? Don't you have to be careful of מכל דבר רע when you're sitting in your home? You hear that question?

The Ramban (ibid) discusses this question and says, והנכון בעיני, the proper perspective in my eyes regarding this *mitzvah*, is that the Torah is warning us that there are certain times where people are vulnerable to sin and that sinning is common.[1] He says, it's a known fact that when people go out to war, they eat all types of abominations. They don't have MREs, (Meals, Ready-to-Eat.) Today, in the American army, when you go into the war, you go with Meals, Ready-to-Eat from Meal Mart that you don't need a refrigerator for. You can have *milchigs*. You can have *fleishigs*. You can have what you want. But in the times of the Torah, they didn't have that, so you scavenged around and you ate any disgusting thing that came to your hand. You lost your humanity when it came to eating.

Says the Ramban, people steal. They rob. They're not embarrassed even to conduct themselves in the most abominable of ways. They'll do any disgusting thing. They lose all sense of self-respect. Even things that naturally people won't do because they usually behave in a well-mannered way, during a war, what happens is you become ruthless, you become angry and a different self appears. That's why the Torah says, *davka* at that time ונשמרת מכל דבר רע, you should watch yourself from מכל דבר רע.

Now, the Satan is *mekatreig* when people are in *sakanah*. You know why? Because that's when *chata'im* are more prevalent. This is the *minhag* of all armies in the world. People lose their morals. There are no refined armies that are *mentshlich*. Sometimes, the army tries to dress them up in nice uniforms to give them a sense of looking like refined and respectable people, but they lose their culture and they become animals. That's what happens in a war.

Now, all you have to do is read about what's going on in Ukraine and Russia and what the Russians do; the ruthlessness, the meanness, the evil - is mind-boggling. Not that the Ukrainians are any major *tzaddikim*, but they manage to hide it better. Russia is very proud of the torturing and the maiming it does to people, to children, to women.

[1] וְנִשְׁמַרְתָּ מִכֹּל דָּבָר רָע, שֶׁהַשָּׂטָן מְקַטְרֵג בְּשָׁעַת הַסַּכָּנָה, לְשׁוֹן רַשִׁ"י (רש"י על דברים כ"ג:י"). וְהַנָּכוֹן בְּעִינַי בְּעִנְיַן הַמְצָוָה הַזֹּאת, כִּי הַכָּתוּב יַזְהִיר בְּעֵת אֲשֶׁר הַחֵטְא מְצוּי בּוֹ, וְהַיְדוּעַ בְּמִנְהֲגֵי הַמִּלְחָמוֹת הֵיוֹצְאוֹת לַמִּלְחָמָה כִּי יֹאכְלוּ כָּל תּוֹעֵבָה, יִגָּזְלוּ וְיִחָמְסוּ, וְלֹא יִתְבּוֹשָׁשׁוּ אֲפִלּוּ בְּנַאוּף וְכָל נִבְלָה, הַיְשֵׁר בְּבֵנֵי אָדָם בְּטִבְעוֹ יִתְלַבֵּשׁ אִכְזָרִיּוּת וְחֵמָה כְּצֵאת מַחֲנֵה עַל אוֹיֵב, וְעַל כֵּן הַזְּהִיר בּוֹ הַכָּתוּב וְנִשְׁמַרְתָּ מִכֹּל דָּבָר רָע. וְעַל דֶּרֶךְ הַפְּשָׁט הִיא אַזְהָרָה מִכָּל הַנֶּאֱסָר. וּבְסִפְרֵי (תצא קיט), וְנִשְׁמַרְתָּ מִכֹּל דָּבָר רָע, שׁוֹמֵעַ אֲנִי בְּטֻמְאוֹת וּבְטָהֳרוֹת וּבְמַעֲשְׂרוֹת הַכָּתוּב מְדַבֵּר, ת"ל עֶרְוָה. אֵין לִי אֶלָּא עֶרְוָה, מְנַיִן לְרִבּוֹת עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה וּגְלוּי עֲרָיוֹת וּשְׁפִיכוּת דָּמִים וְקִלְלַת הַשֵּׁם, ת"ל וְנִשְׁמַרְתָּ מִכֹּל דָּבָר רָע, אוֹ יָכוֹל בְּטֻמְאוֹת וּבְטָהֳרוֹת וּבְמַעֲשְׂרוֹת הַכָּתוּב מְדַבֵּר, ת"ל עֶרְוָה, מָה עֶרְוָה מְיֻחֶדֶת מַעֲשֶׂה שֶׁגָּלוּ עָלֶיהָ כְּנַעֲנִים וּמְסָלָק אֶת הַשְּׁכִינָה, אַף כָּל מַעֲשֶׂה שֶׁגָּלוּ עָלָיו כְּנַעֲנִים וּמְסָלָק אֶת הַשְּׁכִינָה, כְּשֶׁהוּא אוֹמֵר דָּבָר, אַף עַל לְשׁוֹן הָרַע. וְגַם זֶה מִן הַטַּעַם שֶׁפֵּרַשְׁנוּ, כִּי מִלְּבַד הָאַזְהָרוֹת שֶׁבָּאוּ בָּאֵלֶּה הָעֲבֵרוֹת הַחֲמוּרוֹת יוֹסִיף לָאו בְּמַחֲנֶה שֶׁנִּשְׁמַר בּוֹ מִכָּל אֵלּוּ הָעֲבֵרוֹת שֶׁגָּלוּ עָלָיו כְּנַעֲנִים וּמְסָלַק אֶת הַשְּׁכִינָה, כְּשֶׁהוּא אוֹמֵר דָּבָר, אַף עַל לְשׁוֹן הָרַע. וְגַם זֶה מִן הַטַּעַם שֶׁפֵּרַשְׁנוּ, כִּי מִלְּבַד הָאַזְהָרוֹת שֶׁבָּאוּ בָּאֵלֶּה הָעֲבֵרוֹת הַחֲמוּרוֹת יוֹסִיף לָאו בְּמַחֲנֶה שֶׁנִּשְׁמַר בּוֹ מִכָּל אֵלּוּ הָעֲבֵרוֹת שֶׁלֹּא תִסְתַּלֵּק הַשְּׁכִינָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר שָׁם, כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר, כִּי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִתְהַלֵּךְ בֶּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֶךָ. וְהִנֵּה הָעוֹשֶׂה הָעֲבֵרוֹת הַגְּדוֹלוֹת בְּמַחֲנֶה, כְּאוֹתָם שֶׁכָּתוּב בָּהֶם (ירמיהו ז ל), שָׂמוּ שִׁקּוּצֵיהֶם בַּבַּיִת אֲשֶׁר נִקְרָא שְׁמִי עָלָיו לְטַמְּאוֹ, וְעוֹד שֶׁלֹּא יִגְבְּרוּ עָלֵינוּ הָאוֹיְבִים אִם נַעֲשֶׂה כְּמַעֲשֶׂיהָם הַגּוֹרְמִים לָהֶם שֶׁיִּגְלוּ מִפָּנֵינוּ, וְזֶהוּ וְלָתַת אֹיְבֶיךָ לְפָנֶיךָ (שם). וְהוֹסִיפוּ בּוֹ לְשׁוֹן הָרַע כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹּא יִרְבּוּ בֵּינֵינוּ מַחְלוֹקוֹת, וְיִכּוּ בֵּינֵיהֶם מַכָּה רַבָּה מְאֹד יוֹתֵר מִן הָאוֹיְבִים.

More than that, the Ramban says that a war is a bloody thing. You're dealing with a lot of blood. Dealing with blood leaves its signature on human beings and a person's whole sense of normalcy, a sense of right and and wrong - his entire code of morality - can be easily lost. The finest person, when he'll get involved with blood, he'll say, "That's what war is about." It's something that brings out the worst evil in mankind. Anybody who's involved in the war gets sucked into this.

The Ramban concludes and says, that therefore the Torah warns ונשמרת מכל דבר רע. The Torah is telling Klal Yisrael that even when they're in a time that's very not normal, a time when one is very prone to losing oneself and becoming the epitome of evil, still and all, Klal Yisrael should not conduct themselves like the other nations of the world. They are an elevated nation. They are a better nation. From them, Hashem expects more refined actions and behaviors. They have to remain *kadosh*, as the *pasuk* says, ונשמרת מכל דבר רע.

So too, as the *pessukim* go on, the Torah tells the warriors, when they go to war - it's the most amazing thing - they have to conduct themselves with *tznius*. One of the things you have to give the soldiers is a shovel. Why do you give them a shovel? Just because you go to war, doesn't mean you don't have human needs - you will have to relieve yourself. What are you supposed to do? Here, you have a whole platoon of soldiers, and they all feel that they have to go to the bathroom. It's a normal activity. So what do you do? The Torah says all armies worry about one thing when you go to war. What's that? Weapons. Weapons. Knives. Daggers. Guns. Rifles. Machine guns. Automatic weapons. And so on. Klal Yisrael, says the Torah, you have to worry about *tznius*. You have to give them a shovel and they have to use it after they relieve themselves. Now try to picture a guy in a war and he has to go to the bathroom and he finds himself a bush and he relieves himself. The guy is thinking goodbye *zei gezunt*! He's going to go back to the platoon and get back into the war. No, you know what it says here? וכסית את צאתיך, *pashut*, the guy has to take his time to dig a hole! It's *pashut*. It's *mavhil*. That's the demand the Torah puts on a soldier.

Rav Yerucham says, from this Ramban, you see that by *goyishe* nations, there's no such a thing as being preoccupied with building your *mentshlichkeit*, retaining your humanity, or being worried about *tikkun hamiddos*. The only question, the only agenda on the table is: how do you kill the enemy better? That's all. My weaponry, my bullets, my guns, my knives, whatever it is. Tactics. All of that has to be directed at killing my enemy. But Klal Yisrael, the chosen nation, when they go to war, Hakadosh Baruch Hu demands from the soldiers to retain their "self".

A JEW ON VACATION

Now the *emes* is we have to learn a great lesson here. Because there are many times when people go places and they find themselves vulnerable to sin. War is one such situation. But there's another place where people find themselves very vulnerable to sin. When is that? When people go on vacations.

People go to Mexico. People go to Aruba. People go to Greece. Of course, we want to imagine they're all going to separate beaches. And over there, in those foreign countries across Asia, people are living in cesspools of human misery! You say, "How does a *frum Yid* go there?" Everybody knows the *davening* is very *shvach*. The learning is *shvach*. The *mitzvos* are *shvach*. The eating is *shvach*. A person has to know that the Torah wants him to keep up the high levels he had achieved, since Hashem is always with a person.

It doesn't say you can't go on vacation. It says, "Make sure when you're going in a place that's a *makom sakanah*, ונשמרת מכל דבר רע." It's a very important lesson for yourself and for your children, that they know their parents are concerned about their Yiddishkeit when they go away. Sadly, many people lower their morality levels and their *tznius* standards. They walk around acting differently, and they find themselves in a *makom sakanah*, where the Satan is *mekatreig*.

A JEW IS NEVER ALONE

Rav Yerucham said there was once an occasion where the prime minister of Poland came to visit the city of Mir, and he was going to be near the Mir Yeshiva. All the *bnei hayeshivah* went out to be *mekabel panov* of this *grober Polak*. They all got dressed up in their Shabbos finest. They made sure their garments were clean, *k'raui l'kavod hamalchus*. Rav Yerucham looked at all the people who came to be *mekabel pnei hamelech*, this *nasi*. He looked to see if anybody was missing buttons. In Europe, to be missing buttons was pretty common; there were no clotheshorses [people who dress fashionably] over there. Today, every *yeshivah bachur* fancies himself to be a clotheshorse, a *mumcheh* in *begadim*. He dresses nicely. The shirt is important. The pants are important. He thinks he's a *maven* in clothes. But in Europe, it wasn't like that, at least not by the *yeshivah bachurim*. Rav Yerucham noticed that the guys who he thought would be *shleppers* had all their buttons sewed on, and they were all prepared for this visit.

Rav Yerucham spoke about it in *yeshivah*, and he said that a few weeks before that, they read in the *parshah* בנים אתם לה' אלקיכם, you're children of Hashem and therefore you shouldn't make a scratch on your body when you're angry or upset after losing a close relative. It was the custom of *goyim* to scratch and bloody themselves, to scratch their faces. The Torah says, don't do that. You know why? כי עם קדוש אתה לה' אלקיך ובך בחר ה' להיות לו לעם סגולה אשר על פני האדמה Hashem took you as a treasured nation (Devarim 14:2). Rashi says the following: לפי שאתם בניו של מקום, since you are children of Hashem, therefore it's befitting you להיות נאים, to be nice, not to be scratched up, and not to mess yourself up. You hear that?

Rav Yerucham said that our *emunah* in Hashem is such, that Hakadosh Baruch Hu is *mamash* with us. We're in His presence, *mamash*. Therefore, when the Melech is with you, you have to act properly.

If this prime minister, this *goy*, came, and you acted all fancied up, so for Hakadosh Baruch Hu, it should be any less?! There's nothing wrong with a *yeshivah bachur* looking fine. The problem is, if he's trying to impress the *goy*, if he wants the *goy* to think he's cool, that he's not a *shlepper*.

There was a *tekufah*, an era, in Slabodka, when they used to dress fancy. It was to give a *chashivus* to the *yeshivaleit*, to show the *yeshivaleit* are more *chashuv* than the *ba'alebatim,* than the people in the *gas* (a street). In the *parshah* (Ki Seitzei) it says, כי ה' אלהיך מתהלך בקרב מחנך. Rav Yerucham says that means *k'peshuto mamash*. Hashem is always with us. You hear that? That's why you have to maintain your *kedushah* even if you go to war; you're out in the field somewhere; you're hiding in the woods, in some tree. It's not exactly the greatest situation. In that situation, we believe that Hashem is with us. A person who feels the closeness to Hashem and he knows that Hashem is with him at all times, he lives and conducts himself in a totally different fashion.

IT IS MECHABED, NOT MACHBID

Rav Yerucham learned a lot of lessons from that visit of the Polish prime minister. Another thing he learned, he said when the prime minister was about to leave the area of the Mir, they asked him, "What do you think? What's your opinion?" You know what he said? He critiqued them. He criticized them. He said, "*Nisht gefelen*." It didn't satisfy him. Why not? He said, "There was not one request of me. No one beseeched me to help." He said, "In another place I was in before, not far from the Mir, it was named Karelitz, people lay down in the street, in front of the chariot of the prime minister, and they said, "We're not going to let you go, and we're not moving from here, until you save us." The prime minister said, "That's *kavod*! You see, they knew I was the one who was in charge. I was the address to turn to. I was the one to help them. Here, no one asked for anything. *K'eilu* you don't need anything." Rav Yerucham said such a cry for help is *kavod* to the *melech* more than all the *tekes*, the ceremony, more than all the proper *mehalchim*. There is a certain protocol, but asking for help is more than all the protocol. That is *kavod hamalchus*, says Rav Yerucham.

Rav Yerucham further says, "Do you know what it looks like when you have a Yid who doesn't call out to Hashem?" You hear? He doesn't beseech Hashem. If he has *kavod* for Hashem, then he'll beseech Hashem. There's nothing that I have that's not from Hashem. There's nothing that I need that's not coming from Hashem. Hashem wants to be *meitiv* to me. When you're close to Hashem, when you *daven* to Hashem, its פנים אל פנים לפני ה', you're being *omed lifnei Hashem*. There's no greater closeness to Hashem than at that point. You have to know that when you ask Hashem for something, you're being *mechabed* Him. You're acknowledging Hashem, "You're the only one who can provide for me. You're my *Melech Malchei Hamelachim*. You provide, You *want to provide*, and I am in Your hands." That's the *yesod hama'aleh* of Am Yisrael.

BEING SATURATED WITH TEFILLAH

In Tehillim (109:4), it says, Dovid Hamelech said to Hashem: ואני תפילה. Now what does that mean, ואני תפילה? Does it mean he *davened*? Everybody *davens*. What did Dovid Hamelech mean by ואני תפילה?

I once heard a *gevaldig pshat* regarding the meaning of the word *tefillah*. It means, I'm *makir* that I need something, so I *daven* to Hashem. Most people think that, *baruch Hashem*, I'm good to go. My eyes are working. My ears are working. My mouth is working. Generally, everything's working in my system, so I don't feel that I need to beg Hashem for that area. Then I have a headache, or I need money right now to pay my bills, to pay my mortgage, or I need a *chavrusa*. So a guy turns to Hashem, if he has brains, and he pours his needs out to Hashem. That's not called ואני תפילה. That's called *ani mispallel,* I'm *davening* for my needs.

Dovid Hamelech reached the highest level. The highest level is there's not one part of my existence that I'm not *mispallel* for. I am so involved with tefillah that my essence is *tefillah*. Every single thing about me, every little bit of my being - I need to be bound to Hashem and I need to rely on Hashem and beseech Him. So the more a person realizes that he's *talui* on Hashem and he's not independent, the more he's bound to Hashem. And the more he thinks he doesn't need Hashem, the more he's distancing himself from Him, and he is not bound to Hashem. Then Hashem has to come knocking on the door.

It can be scary when a person realizes how dependent he is on Hakadosh Boruch Hu. Hashem wants you to respect Him by beseeching Him, by asking Him, "Please, *Tatteh* help me. Without You, I have *gornisht*, I am *gornisht*." When a person wants to get married, so then, he usually realizes he needs Hashem. A lot of times, people don't realize it. They think they can get married without Hashem. People have to realize it, and people do realize it, and then what happens? They plead, they beseech, and ultimately Hashem gives them their needs. Some of them give up. They don't want to ask anymore. They get tired. *Nu*, so they're not *talui* on Hashem. They surely don't stand a chance. You have no choice but to be *mispallel* and *mispallel* and *mispallel* for every single thing about yourself that you need Hakadosh Baruch Hu. For *shalom bayis*, for *simchas hachayim*, for children, for healthy children, for healthy *einiklach*. You have to always *daven*, "Hashem, Hakadosh Baruch Hu, *Avinu Malkeinu*, bring us back." כי ה' אלוקיך מתהלך בקרב מחניך.

This is our *avodah* in Elul, Rabbosai. This is what we need to develop in Elul.

The Holy Spice of Shabbos (5772)

TAKE TIME TO REFLECT ON OUR NESHAMAH YESIRAH

Shteit in the Chumash, "לדעת כי אני ה' מקדשכם – Know that I am Hashem Who sanctifies you." The Gemara Beitzah (16a) explains: אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה משה מתנה טובה יש לי בבית גנזי ושבת שמה ואני מבקש ליתנה לישראל לך והודיע אותם – Hakadosh Baruch Hu said to Moshe: "Moshe! I have a wonderful gift in My treasury. It's called Shabbos, and I want to give it to *klal Yisrael*. Go and tell them." The Gemara continues: דאמר ר' שמעון בן לקיש נשמה יתירה נותן הקב"ה באדם בערב שבת ולמוצאי שבת נוטלין אותה הימנו שנאמר שבת וינפש – Hakadosh Baruch Hu places an extra *neshamah* in a person on *erev Shabbos*, and on *motzei Shabbos*, He takes it back.[2]

The *neshamah yesirah* is that *matanah* given every single Shabbos from the *bais genazav shel Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. It is worth it to be *misbonein* and ponder that idea. It's easier if you're not in such a rush where you run into Shabbos; instead, you follow the Rambam (Hil. Shabbos 30:2) and sit and wait, eagerly anticipating Shabbos's arrival as you would for a king. You are *meyachel* for the Shabbos to come, thinking that right now, Hashem is giving me an injection. Personally, I picture either a needle or *nefichah*, that Hashem is breathing into me. מאן דנפח מדיליה נפח – Hashem blows into us a *neshamah yesirah*. This is what the *passuk* means: לדעת כי אני ה' מקדשכם – To know that I Myself, Hashem, makes you holy.

THE NESHAMAH YESEIRAH BRINGS US TO SIMCHA

Rashi (Beitza 16a ד"ה נשמה יתירה) says an interesting thing when describing this *neshamah yeseirah*.[3] He writes that it is *marchiv* the *leiv*. It expands a person's heart and mind, transforming him from a *metzumtzem*, a limited, small-minded person, to a *rochav lev*. Do you know what small-minded people do? There is a massive, beautiful world out there, and they focus on the one thing that seems not right or out of place. A man has a wife and children. They have a home and a place to eat. They have clothing. They have *kol tuv!* But his car needs an oil change, or he's worried about how he's going to get to some meeting, and that's all he can think about! He's *ois mensch!* The *ganse velt is battulu'mevutal* because of one thing that isn't right! It's a *gefehrliche zach*.

On Shabbos, Hashem gives you a רוחב לב למנוחה, expanding your horizons to give you a sense of peace. He gives you *menuchah*. On Shabbos you aren't occupied with *narishkeit*. ולשמחה – And happiness! The *neshamah yeseirah* puts a person in a happy mood, Hashem gives you *simchah*.

Rashi continues: ויאכל וישתה ואין נפשו קצה עליו – you can eat and drink and your *nefesh* doesn't feel repulsed by the food. It doesn't say you eat a lot; it says, ואין נפשו קצה. What does that mean? People make a mistake, thinking Rashi means you should eat and drink a lot—*marbeh b'achilah v'shtiyah*. But Rashi doesn't say that! He says only that a person should eat and drink. We need the frame of mind of *menuchah v'simchah*, where you don't feel repulsed. What does Rashi mean by that?

WHAT'S REALLY IN OUR FOOD?

If you take a look at the side of a cereal box, or any package of food, it gives you a list of everything that's in there. And every time I look at these lists I think to myself, they're such liars! Some guy puts it on there, but no one is ever going to test it.

Do you really want to know what's in our food? In *Ruach Chaim* on Avos (3:3), R' Chaim Volozhiner quotes R' Chaim Vital on the possuk (Devarim 8:3) כי לא על הלחם לבדו יחיה האדם כי על כל מוצא פי השם, and shares an interesting science lesson about food. He says every single morsel of food consists of three different parts.

Part one is the *dvar Hashem*. In every single morsel of food, there is the *dvar Hashem* being *mekayem* the *ochel*. Why doesn't the food disappear, disintegrate, or evaporate? It's the *dvar Hashem*! It's Hashem's ויהי. Hashem says to the particles that make up each food: "Sit! Stay together, in exactly this way." Bread should have this texture – soft and airy. Fish should have its own delicate texture. Apples should be crisp and juicy. Peaches should be soft and sweet. Every food has precisely the texture, consistency, flavor, aroma, and form that Hakadosh Baruch Hu wants it to have. That's true of every single fruit, every vegetable, every grain, and every piece of food. You're looking at a *cheftza* of *dvar Hashem*. This is what the possuk in Devarim means. The *dvar Hashem* becomes the *mazon* to nurture the *neshamah*. When a person eats, especially food from a *seudas mitzvah*, it contains a big dose of *dvar Hashem*. That is *mazon* for a person's *neshamah*.

The second thing, writes Rav Chaim Vital, is the physical *chelek* of the food. This is the part that nourishes our body. This is the *chelek hagashmi*, the physical component, that sustains the *guf*. And that's why *al yedei achilah* you have a bond between the *guf* and the *nefesh*. Because every food has both the *dvar Hashem* and a physical element. Food is different from other *ruchniyus* things like Torah or tefillah. They are certainly *dvar Hashem*. But they do not have an iota of *gashmiyus* at all. So the *guf* does not bond with the *neshamah* in that case.

[2] אמר רבי חמא ברבי חנינא: הנותן מתנה לחברו אין צריך להודיעו, שנאמר: "ומשה לא ידע כי קרן עור פניו". מיתיבי: "לדעת כי אני ה' מקדשכם", אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה: משה! מתנה טובה יש לי בבית גנזי ושבת שמה, ואני מבקש ליתנה לישראל, לך והודיע אותם. מכאן אמר רבן שמעון בן גמליאל: הנותן פת לתינוק, צריך להודיע לאמו. לא קשיא: הא במתנה דעבידא לאגלויי, הא במתנה דלא עבידא לאגלויי. שבת נמי מתנה דעבידא לאגלויי! מתן שכרה לא עבידא לאגלויי.

[3] נשמה יתירה - רוחב לב למנוחה ולשמחה ולהיות

Then there is a third *chelek* in every food. Through the *chet* of the *eitz hadaas,* everything in the world became a *taaroves*, a mixture of *tov v'rah*. When Adam and Chava ate the *eitz hadaas*, the land became cursed. Anything that is on the earth nowadays is a *taaroves* of *tov v'rah*. This is true of the *klippah*, in the inedible outside shell and peel, and also of the *penimiyus*, the flesh of the fruit which is *mazon l'nefesh* and *mazon l'guf*. This is also a mixture of *tov v'rah*. From the good part, the *neshamah* becomes sustained. The *gashmiyus* part sustains the *guf* by turning it into our blood. It goes coursing through our digestive system, breaking down, and releasing its nutrients throughout the body.

The *rah*, the *chelek* of *rah* in every food is excreted, our body sends it out. That's why, R' Chaim brings down, it's *assur* to be *meharher b'divrei Torah* in a *makom hatinofes*. What's the *pshat*? Why can't you? It's a normal bodily function, why can't you learn Torah in a restroom? He explains that the *beis ha'kisei* is the *makom* for *rah*, that's the room where you excrete the *chelek harah she'b'maachel*, the *chelek* of *chet*, and that cannot serve as a *makom* Torah.

A KORBAN, LIKE THE MANA, IS KULO TOV

Then Reb Chaim explains the *yesod* of a *korban*. You put a *korban* on the *mizbeach*, you're *makriv* it on the *mizbeach* and the fire from Above, the *eish me'l'maalah*, removes the *ra* from the *korban*. The fire on the mizbeach burns the *eimurim* but it is also *machshir* the rest of the *korban* that is eaten by the owners and the Kohanim. *Hakravas hakorban* is a *hechsher* of a *korban* that burns out all the dross. That *eish* that comes from *Shomayim* burns out the *chelek hara*, and now the rest remains to the *baalim*. When the owner eats a *korban*, it's *kulo tov*. And that's also the concept of the *mon* which was also *kulo tov*, and was therefore completely absorbed into the body. It also came down from Above, like the fire on the *mizbeach*. Why? אין רע יורד מן השמים – no *rah* comes down from *Shomayim*. And this is similarity between *mon* and a *korban*.

So now we gain a tremendous insight into food. Rashi says that normally, a person is repulsed by food and drink. There is something about *ma'achel v'mishteh* that the *nefesh* of a *mensch* is repulsed by. It's not from the first two *chalakim* of the food. The first two *chalakim,* even the *dvar Hashem she'b'maachel,* no one is repulsed by that. The *chelek* of the *mazon* that is *mechayeh* and *mekayem* a person's *guf*, that's also not something that makes a person feel negative toward it. That is *mechazek* the *guf* and the *nefesh*, that's מפליא לעשות, that's a wonderful thing. The repulsion that a person has is from the third part. Because when he approaches *achilah*, he is approaching something which has a *chelek* of *ra* that comes from *chet*. And his nefesh wants to stay far away from it.

FOOD PREPARED FOR SHABBOS IS KULO TOV

Zogt Rashi, do you want to know what the *neshamah yeseirah* of Shabbos does to a person? It makes that he doesn't feel any association with the *chelek ha'ra* in any way. Shabbos is a day of *kedushah*, and the food is elevated. On Shabbos there's a special *inyan l'hisaneig b'maachalim*, to enjoy the food. The *maachel* of Shabbos is what bonds a person to his *neshamah yeseirah*. The main place of feeling and connecting to your *neshamah yesirah* is through the Shabbos food. Why? Because it's pure, just *devar Hashem*. Any food that was prepared for Shabbos is *kulo tov*. If it was prepared for Thursday night, then it has a *taaroves* of *rah v'tov* in it. But when you prepare a *maachel l'kavod Shabbos*, it's elevated, it's exalted to a *level* that is unimaginable. And that's why even a person's *nefesh* is drawn to that *maachel*; he is not repulsed in any way.

The Gaon writes in Aderes Eliyahu on Bereishis that the mitzvah of להתענג על השבת to make the Shabbos a delight, is with food and drink. He says, והיא קודש כמו שהיה באכילת קרבנות – The Shabbos food is holy, just like eating *korbanos*!

In his *peirush* to Mishlei the Gaon brings down from the Arizal that there is no waste from the food eaten on Shabbos, כי הכל בקדושה – because it's all done in holiness. Amazing! That is how the Arizal explained the Gemara, which relates that Caesar asked Rebbi Yehoshua ben Chananyah, "Why does this food smell so good?" Rebbi Yehoshua replied that he had put a special *taam* into it. So what is that "spice"? It's name is "Shabbos". It's a cute thing we tell all the kids, but *vos meint dos?* Does that make the smell better? *Vos iz dos*? The *kedushah* of Shabbos manifests itself in a new way in the *maachalim b'metziyus,* because the *rah she'bo* is removed for Shabbos. The *taaroves* of *rah v'tov* that you have in *maachalim*, *iz nit doh off Shabbos*. It's a different, elevated entity. *Hafleh v'feleh*!

DON'T OVERDO EATING AND DRINKING ON SHABBOS

Before you get too excited and decide to spend the rest of your Shabbos eating and drinking, you have to understand that, *takke*, it is wrong to eat too much on Shabbos. The Rishonim say that one of the reasons why Hashem made the mitzvah of *Shalosh Seudos*, is that we shouldn't eat too much. Because if you only had one *seudah* you'd eat like you had three or four stomachs, and then you wouldn't eat again until Sunday. But now that you know that you have to eat three *seudos*, you'll be careful not to eat too much at each one. The Abudraham says it explicitly, the reason why Hashem instructed us to have a few *seudos* is in order so that we should curb ourselves, control ourselves. We're eating *dvar Hashem* over here, we're eating *tov* without any *ra*! You have to curb yourself. The question is why. Why must we hold back?

THE YETZER TRIPS US THROUGH MITZVOS

The Gaon writes in Mishlei that the *yetzer ha'ra* tries to tempt a person to do *aveiros*. It doesn't try to tempt a person right off with *grobbe aveiros*. He doesn't say, "Go worship idols"; He knows it's not an *eitzah*. The Jewish people are righteous – ועמך כולם צדיקים – and the Yetzer knows no one will listen. So what does the yetzer do? He comes with mitzvos – בא אליו במצוות. How does this work? He gets you to eat for a mitzvah. The Gaon refers to this as *zivchei shlamim*. To eat from a *korban shlamim* is a *mitzvah gedolah*, to eat and be happy. But once the yetzer gets you in the eating mode of this *gevaldige heilige achilah*, then it says, "Ok, my friend, *lummer redin a bissel*; next step, let's be *nimshach* to the next step." Let's take it up a notch and become even more *megusham*. *Az azoi shteit*, אין יצר הרע בא אל האדם אלא מתוך אכילה ושתיה – the yetzer ra only approaches a person through food and drink. It's one of the ways the *yetzer ha'ra* comes to a *mensch*. The Gaon says all of the *pituyei hayetzer* are this way – it finds you something that has *tov*, and it can get you to indulge in the *ra*, because you're not going to listen to plain *ra*. The Gaon says that the reason a person has to be careful with Shabbos is because the *yetzer ha'ra* is going to take advantage of us eating for a mitzva and compel us to indulge even more. And then what happens? After you eat your fill, you have to go to sleep. So you sleep for twenty-five hours, or you're in sleep mode, even if you get up a little bit.

There was a *yid*, R' Binyamin Shklobe of Shkloff, he was from *talmidei* haGaon, and he writes the Gaon used to always say this pearl of wisdom. By Shabbos there is a mitzvah להתענג באכילה ושתיה. And there's also a mitzvah to learn Torah on Shabbos, especially on Shabbos. So the Gaon used to say it's much better to be *marbeh b'limud* than to be *marbeh* באכילה ושתיה. You know why? He said because the *hergel* of *limud* becomes a *tevah* to you, it becomes ingrained in you. And, now you'll also learn *b'chol, during the week*! And *limud haTorah* is always a mitzvah. אכילת שבת will cause you to be *me'orer* your *taavas achilah* even *b'chol*. That's the reason why a person has to eat and drink but in a limited fashion.

A lot of times what happens is you buy good *maachalim* for Shabbos, and you think, "Listen, it can't taste that bad on Tuesday." So then you try them on Tuesday, then you try them Wednesday. Why? Because you need it. Then you become a recipe person, you become an expert chef, and you try your hand at it, and that's what happens.

So a person has to understand the *gevaldige chessed* that Hakadosh Baruch Hu did on Shabbos when He put a *neshamah yeseirah* into us, and how this translates into the *maachalim* themselves. A person should appreciate that when he eats the *maachalim*, he should thank Hakadosh Baruch Hu for giving him true organic food – even if it's not whole grain or spelt, or it's not gluten-free, it is *ra*-free. Still, a person has to be careful not to overdo it and not to be taken over by the *koach* of *achilah*.