

EIKEV
THE FOUR JEWELS

A

A Lamp in Pieces

The *parsha* starts with a promise from Hashem. “*V’haya eikev tishme’un es ha’mishpatim etc.* If you would listen to my laws, then as a result I will keep for you the promise that I made to your fathers and forefathers,” to give you blessings (Devarim 7:12). *Eikev*, meaning as a result, is an unusual word. It is also unnecessary in the verse. The *pasuk* could have just said, “*V’haya im tishme’un—*If you listen to My laws, then I will fulfill My promise.”

The Midrash here relates a baffling sequence of ideas. It discusses someone who owns a disassembled lamp and considers if one can reassemble it on Shabbos. The *chachamim* taught that someone who assembles a disassembled lamp so that it can be used on Shabbos is *chayav* a *chatas* because he has violated Shabbos. This is like someone who builds something on Shabbos. The Midrash continues, I gave you Shabbos for your own benefit. On Shabbos a person eats and drinks and wears nice clothing and enjoys the Shabbos. I will give you reward for that. As the verse says, “*v’karasa la’shabbos oneg—*You will enjoy the Shabbos” (Yeshayahu 58:13). The *pasuk* continues that you will then enjoy Hashem, and He will grant your heart’s desires. Israel asks Hashem, “When will we receive the reward for our *mitzvos*?” Hashem

answers, “When you do *mitzvos* you will eat the fruits of those *mitzvos* now. But the actual reward will come at the end—*b’eikev ani nosein lachem*.” In this usage *eikev* means at the end, like the heel at the end of the body. Returning to our verse, the Midrash understands that the word *eikev* here means at the end of time. If Jews will keep the *mitzvos* at the end of time, then Hashem says that He will keep His promise.

This Midrash is entirely baffling! Why does it start with a discussion of assembling a lamp on Shabbos? Then it discusses enjoying Shabbos. If you enjoy Shabbos Hashem will give you more pleasure. Then it teaches that there is no reward now for *mitzvos*. Instead, we receive fruits now and reward only at the end of time. The flow of this Midrash from one idea to the another is incomprehensible.

B

Two Gifts

Shem Mishmuel explains this Midrash with another one. The second Midrash states: A king gave his queen two precious stones to wear on her dress. When she put on the dress with the two stones, he was so impressed that he gave her another two gifts.

Avraham gave his children two precious stones, two gifts. In Parshas Vayeira Hashem said about Avraham, “I know that he will teach his children and his family to keep the way of God, to do *tzedaka* and *mishpat*, charity and justice.” These are the two gifts that Avraham gave to his offspring. In response to these two gifts from Avraham, God gave two more gifts, *chesed* and *rachamim*, kindness and mercy.

There are two *psukim*: *V’shamar Hashem l’cha es ha’bris v’es ha’chesed*. And, *V’nasan l’cha rachamim v’richamecha* (Devarim 13:18), God will keep the promise of *chesed* and *rachamim*.

The Midrash continues. The prophet says about Bnei Yisrael

that “They perverted justice and charity and turned it into poison.” So, Hashem took back His gifts, *chesed* and *rachamim*. Later the Jews fixed themselves and repented, earning back these two precious stones. “*Tziyon b’mishpat ti’pade, v’shaveha bi’tzedaka*. Tziyon will be redeemed with justice and her prisoners through charity.” This *pasuk* means that the people will reestablish these two traits. So, then Hashem will also bring back His two gifts. “*He’harim yamushu v’hagivaos timatena*—Just as mountains cannot move and hills cannot collapse,” Hashem says, “My kindness will never be taken away from you, nor will My covenant of peace leave you” (Yeshayahu 54:10). Kindness and mercy will be restored. Once Israel does its part, Hashem will do His part. He then prepares a new crown for Bnei Yisrael. He proclaims His everlasting love and commitment to the Jewish people. “I will marry you forever, I will marry you with *tzedek, mishpat, chesed, and rachamim*” (Hoshea 2:21).

This is a beautiful Midrash about how two equals two. Avraham taught his children about charity and justice. These traits evoked a response from Hashem and He gave *chesed* and *rachamim*. Then, because Bnei Yisrael perverted charity and justice, they went into exile and Hashem took away the two gifts. Eventually, the Jews will repent and reestablish charity and justice. Hashem will then respond with *chesed* and *rachamim*. Then will come the ultimate merger: *v’eirastich li b’tzedek uv’mishpat uv’chesed uv’rachamim*. All four gifts will form the eternal bond between Hashem and His beloved bride, Israel.

Shem Mishmuel will explain the two jewels of the people and the two jewels of Hashem. These traits became four diamonds in the bejeweled crown of Am Yisrael. What are these *middos* and what do they represent?

Moach and Lev

Generally, the Torah focuses on two parts of the human personality: the mind and the heart. God gave us the Torah as a gift to help us develop and perfect our intellect and emotions. One without the other is insufficient. The Torah has many *mitzvos* for the *sechel*, the mind, such as studying Torah, thinking about Hashem, and pondering the connection between God and the universe. The Torah also directs many *mitzvos* to our *lev*, our heart. For example, we must love one another, love Hashem, and we must be kind and charitable.

You can't have one of these without the other. Throughout Jewish history, many offshoots from Torah Judaism unfortunately attempted to split the mind and the heart. They presented only a certain portion of Torah. Some emphasized the heart and negated the mind, while others focused on the mind while ignoring the heart. For example, the Christians emphasized the heart over the mind. They concentrated on love and dropped Torah laws and study. Others have tried to split the *mitzvos* that have to do with Hashem from the *mitzvos* relating to man. All of these attempts and offshoots have failed. None have replaced authentic Torah Judaism. Judaism has stayed loyal to the teaching of God—*lo sosif* and *lo sigra*, don't add or subtract to the Torah that Hashem gave us. We have to develop our intellect through the study of Torah. We have to develop our emotional experience of Torah as well, through prayer and kindness.

Parents who are raising children must be very careful to develop both of these elements in their children. As an educator myself, I notice that sometimes our education emphasizes one to the detriment of the other. Jewish education today often emphasizes the intellectual side and doesn't emphasize enough the emotional side of Judaism. This is regretful. The Torah is not about producing robots with brains that contain a lot of information. We need

to be passionate and emotional about our Judaism. We can't go through routines without feelings. It is unfortunate when people observe a shallow religion. We must reach the essence, which is to have a relationship with Hashem. We can and should feel towards Hashem as a married person feels attached to her or his spouse. The attachment must be emotional, not just philosophical.

If you have a child in such a school with intellect but little emotional spirituality, I recommend that you as the parent fill the gap. Give your child emotional experiences that get him excited about the Torah and about being a servant of the Almighty. It is important that we give our children the happiness of being part of the chosen people.

D

Chesed + Mishpat = Rachamim

The heart and the mind are an indivisible double foundation of living as a Jew. Avraham Avinu, the founding Jewish father, taught his children two fundamental ways of life, charity and justice. Charity stems from the emotions. We must feel for the unfortunate, cry together with a sad person, and laugh with people who are laughing. As human beings and members of Hashem's people, we must have feelings. On the other hand, *mishpat*, justice, is a function of the mind. We must develop our commitment to truth, fairness and justice. Therefore, Avraham taught the Jewish people *tzedaka* and *mishpat*, of both the heart and the mind.

Hashem responds by giving the Jewish people two gifts: *chesed* and *rachamim*, mercy and kindness. What is the difference between these two traits? A *chesed* is a kindness that is not necessarily deserved by the recipient. *Chesed* in Hebrew means something beyond what is necessary and justified. The word *chasid* refers to someone who does *lifnim mi'shuras ha'din*, more than what the

strict letter of the law calls for. This is something extra, something that he volunteers to do.

Rachamim means being kind to someone when he deserves it. It is a mixture of *chesed* and *din*. The first concept of the seven *sefiros* is *chesed*. After *chesed* comes *din*. The third concept is *rachamim*. *Chesed* refers to the undeserved goodness that Hashem often gives to the world. *Din* is when God is strict, exacting and demanding. *Rachamim* is a fusion of *chesed* and *din*. Sometimes a person needs a little something extra, yet in a certain way he deserves it too. This is *rachamim*.

In our prayers we ask Hashem to have mercy on us, just as a father has mercy on his children, *k'rachem av al banim*, which is our *ideal* relationship with Him. We don't say *k'chesed*, as a father does *chesed* for his son. We ask Hashem for mercy as a father is merciful to his son. A father holds the power of *din*. He is strong and exacting. He teaches his child Torah, what is right and wrong. A child, though, also needs *chesed*. Children don't always keep strict rules. They will break the rules. A good father therefore needs to have both *chesed* and *din*. This is why we ask Hashem to express His mercy towards us like a father. We are working to be good children. We know though that we are not perfect, just like children. We ask Hashem. "Please look at the virtues we do have, and please give us some extra blessings since, after all, we are trying."

E

Redeveloping Our Good *Middos*

Unfortunately, we did not succeed in maintaining this level of behavior at all times. We as a people perverted *tzedaka* and *mishpat*. The Jewish people are constantly under spiritual attack by the forces of evil. When the Jewish people succumb, we twist these *middos*. We end up having mercy for and giving charity to

evildoers when we really should not. In our mistaken approach we often apply *mishpat* to *tzaddikim*, judging them as if they are evil *resha'im*. When this happens, Hashem takes back His *chesed* and *rachamim*. “You are not doing your part, and I will not do My part.” In the future, though, the Jewish people will do *teshuva*, restoring *tzedaka* and *mishpat*. Then Hashem will restore *chesed* and *rachamim*.

The original *tzedaka u'mishpat* that the Jewish people practiced came from the teachings of Avraham. They didn't develop it on their own. But then they eventually lost it. In the future, though, *tziyon b'mishpat tipade, v'shaveha bi'tzedaka*—the Jewish people themselves will develop *mishpat* and *tzedaka*. This development will serve as their merit to return to Yerushalayim. In the future, Hashem will respond with *chesed* and *rachamim*; He will create a crown with four setting for all four jewels. It will be a combination of the *middos* that Bnei Yisrael developed and the *middos* that Hashem granted us. This will last forever with the advent of Mashiach and the eternal redemption of Israel.

Every part of this will be part of Hashem's creation. The *tzedaka* and *mishpat* which the Jewish people will do in the future will come because of God's inspiration. “*Ki mimcha hakol*—You, Hashem, give us the ability to do what is right.”

F

Hashem Helps Us Succeed

We can pray that Hashem should help us do *tzedaka u'mishpat*. We choose these behaviors as our contribution to this four-jeweled crown. But we still need Hashem's help to choose properly and to behave virtuously. Hashem stays with us despite our failings; He is Hashem *ha'shochen itam b'soch tumosam*. Hashem gives us strength to be successful, not only in the material realm, but in the spiritual one as well. This is why we ask Hashem, “*Hashiveinu*

eilecha v'nahsuva. Help us return, and then we will return to you!" (Eicha 5:21).

I heard this many times from my great Rebbe the Rav *zt"l*, Rav Yosef Dov Halevi Soloveitchik. The thirteen *middos harachamim*, which form a critical part of our *tefilos* for forgiveness, start with the name of Hashem twice. Chazal say that the first name applies before the sin. When things are going well, God is with us. The repeated name of Hashem refers to after the sin. When the Jewish people sin, in a sense Hashem turns away from us. But in a certain way, Hashem remains loyal to us. Mysteriously, He remains dedicated to us even in our defilement. He stays loyal to us no matter our mistakes. This is Hashem who brings us back.

Even when a Jew sins, a part of him never abandons his commitment to Hashem. The Ba'al Hatanya speaks about this topic. In his day, about 250 years ago, even the Jews who were not keeping Torah and *mitzvos* would never convert. They would give their life rather than abandon their faith. Today, I don't know if we can say that, as many Jews have abandoned Judaism. However, even very distant Jews sometimes return and come back to God. It is impossible to predict who is lost forever. A Jew could be intermarried, could even eat on Yom Kippur. But one day, something will happen to inspire him or her and they will come back. Deep inside, every Jew has an inner unbreakable connection to Hashem, Who continues to live with us even after we sin.

The Jewish nation knows, "*Ki mi'yadcha hakol. L'cha hakol, umiyadcha nasanu lach*. From You, Hashem, is everything. We give You that which is Yours." Even our return to Hashem comes from inspiration that we receive from Him. Even when we choose to do good things, it is with the energy and inspiration that He gives us. So we pray to Hashem, "*Hashiveinu Hashem eilecha v'nashuva*. Return us to You. You can help us do *teshuva*."

Our spiritual struggles are ongoing, and our greatest ally is Hashem *achar ha'chet*, He Who lives with us even in our defilement, *b'soch tumosam*. Despite our mistakes Hashem stays with

us. We do not accept the theory of other religions that a sinner is doomed. We can do *teshuva* and Hashem helps us. We know this secret. Just as we give Him credit for our return, He gives us credit for His return.

These are the four jewels that create the final crown of Israel. It is hard to say who gave which jewels. Did the Jews give *tzedaka* or *mishpat*, or was it Hashem who led them there? Did Hashem give *chesed* and *rachamim* or was it the Jewish people who brought Him to give them to us? In any event, the four jewels become one array in the crown of Israel at the time of the redemption of Israel.

G

The Lamp and The Light

Now we will return to the difficult Midrash about putting together a lamp on Shabbos. We spoke of *tzedaka* and *mishpat*, charity and justice, heart and mind. The *pasuk* says, “*ki ner mitzva v’Torah ohr*. A lamp is like a *mitzva* and the Torah is the light of the lamp” (Mishlei 6:23). These two elements are indivisible. You can’t have oil burning unless it is in a lamp. *Mitzva* has to do with *lev*, the heart, a person’s emotional attachment and desire to God’s commandments. Torah is the *sechel*, the intellect. A lamp with light in it is the combination of *mitzva* and Torah, *lev* and *moach*. You need the lamp and the light in order to have any benefit. You cannot split between the *sechel* and the *lev*.

The Midrash says you can put together a lamp during the week, but not on Shabbos. A symbolic way of understanding this relates to our struggles. During the week, our struggle is to perfect our mind and heart, to coordinate them to work in tandem. These two aspects of our personalities should become allies in performing the will of Hashem and doing the *mitzvos* of the Torah. We develop the heart and we develop the mind and we put them together. We build the lamp and light the lamp.

On Shabbos, though, you stop building the lamp. Your struggle during the week will be completed on Shabbos by Shabbos itself. Shabbos is God's gift to Israel; it is *me'ein olam haba*. In Parshas Bereishis, the *pasuk* says about the first Shabbos, *Va'yechulu ha'shamayim v'ha'aretz*. Everything was completed on Shabbos (Bereishis 2:1). There is a certain gift that Hashem gives every Jew on Shabbos: Our struggles cease, we are complete, we feel a wholeness. In K'gavna, the special passage from the Zohar that we recite on Friday night, we read of the *raza d'echad*, the secret of oneness. All conflicts of the week, all the frustration and lack of completion, all our feelings of being shattered or broken disappear on Shabbos. It is *me'ein olam haba*, completion.

On Shabbos we don't build the lamp. The lamp comes together on its own. This is the *raza d'echad*, the secret of oneness that the Zohar refers to.

H

Bright Shabbos Lights

Shem Mishmuel says different people have different kinds of lamps on Shabbos. Some people have a Shabbos lamp that burns very bright, with many branches and candles. This kind of lamp can light up the whole room or house, or even a city. Other people have small Shabbos lamps with two candles, that just light up their own room.

What determines the size of a person's Shabbos lamp? The weekday struggle to put together the Torah of the *sechel* and *lev* gives energy and light to a person's Shabbos.

How much do we struggle to live Torah lives? We have to work hard to combine our emotional sides and our logical sides. As much as we struggle during the week to put together this lamp of *ner mitzva v'Torah ohr*, that's how much we will enjoy the lamp of *va'yechulu* on Shabbos. Someone who struggles very hard to

put together *sechel* and *lev* will have a gigantic Shabbos lamp that will light up the city. Someone who doesn't struggle will have a small lamp.

This is why the Midrash continues from the idea of the lamp to the way a person builds the Shabbos. It means that according to the amount of effort you invest during the week, Shabbos will complete you. If your Shabbos follows a week of tremendous effort, on Shabbos Hashem will restore your pleasure. Hashem says, "I will give you tremendous pleasure from being with Me on Shabbos." This is the amazing *s'char*, the reward that we do in fact receive in this world.

The Midrash asked if we get reward for other *mitzvos* in this world. The answer is no. The reward for *mitzvos* will only be at the end of time, *eikev*. Only Shabbos has this incredible gift of *oneg*, pleasure, in this world. Why? Since Shabbos itself is a gift from another world, we can feel the *oneg* of that world on this special day. When we go into Shabbos we know we are in a time warp. It's not just another day in the week. We are in a completely different realm. All that concerns us during the week—finances, relationships, problems, even sins—all disappear on Shabbos. We are not involved in any of these struggles then. *Ba'a Shabbos ba'a menucha* (Rashi to Bereishis 2:2). When Shabbos comes, peaceful rest comes with it.

Olam haba is beyond time, a different level. Shabbos is the only *mitzva* from which we can taste otherworldly pleasure. Other *mitzvos*, though, are involved with this world. We do them, but it is impossible to enjoy the *s'char* for these *mitzvos*. This world has too much *tuma* for the *s'char* of the feeling of connection to Hashem during the week. Though you can feel an important *olam hazeh*-type connection, the *s'char* is reserved for *olam haba*. This is different than Shabbos, because Shabbos itself is a kind of *olam haba*, with a tangible *s'char*. On Shabbos we come to the secret of the All. This one day out of seven is completely different than the

other six. *Az tisanag*, when you keep Shabbos you will have the *oneg*, the deep pleasure of *olam haba*.

I

Reward for One *Mitzva*

The Midrash says you will have *s'char* here for one *mitzva*: Shabbos. For the rest of the *mitzvos* the reward will come *eikev*, at the end of time. For Shabbos, though, we can feel the reward that comes from the peaceful confluence of *moach* and *lev*. When the person who struggles during the week receives his great *ner Shabbos*, he tastes this perfection of *olam haba*—even in this world.

May we all be *zocheh* to succeed in this great challenge of the Torah, to combine *moach* and *lev*. Through our struggles during the week we will merit the amazing and incredible pleasure of the great Shabbos. We taste it every seven days, and it is only a small taste of the great eternal Shabbos of the World to Come.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the two gifts of Avraham?
2. What two gifts does Hashem give to the Jewish people?
3. How does Torah view the intellect and the emotions?
4. What is the great struggle during the week?
5. What happens on Shabbos and why?

EXERCISES

1. Focus for one week on your intellect.
2. Focus for one week on your emotions.
3. Focus on Shabbos and its experience of *olam haba*.

