



## His Light Shines On

Excerpts from upcoming books  
drawn from the classes of  
**Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, z"l**

Plus: Never-before-seen pictures  
from his life



40<sup>th</sup> yahrzeit dinner honoring  
Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, z"l  
11 Kislev 5779

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We are pleased to present excerpts from five upcoming books based on the classes of Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, z"l.

Rabbi Rosenfeld was a consummate educator, always seeking to expand his students' understanding of Rebbe Nachman's words while giving them new ways to view their own lives through the lens of the Rebbe's teachings. Rabbi Rosenfeld's tireless efforts to spread Breslov Chassidus laid the groundwork for the explosion of interest in Rebbe Nachman that we see today in the English-speaking world. This collection features excerpts from the following works now being prepared for publication by the Breslov Research Institute:

**The American Breslov Pioneer:  
The Life and Legacy of Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, z"l**

A compelling biography of one of the most inspiring and influential figures in Breslov Chassidus and American Jewish history

***Siach HaNeshamah* – Volume 2**

Rabbi Rosenfeld's Hebrew-language *peirush* on Rebbe Nachman's lessons in *Sichos HaRan*

**Rebbe Nachman's Soul – Volume 3**

An in-depth, English-language commentary on *Sichos HaRan* from the classes of Rabbi Rosenfeld

**Life After Life:**

**Moshiach, Gan Eden and the Resurrection of the Dead**

A compilation of Rabbi Rosenfeld's classes on the afterlife and the World to Come

**Eternal Voice:**

**Linking the Ancient Voice of the Prophets to  
Our Everyday Lives**

Penetrating insights from the Navi classes given by Rabbi Rosenfeld

THE AMERICAN BRESLOV PIONEER

# THE AMERICAN BRESLOV PIONEER

The Life and Legacy of  
Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, z"l



Uman 1963

*A modern-day pioneer who brought Breslov Chassidus to America and nurtured its growth for more than thirty years*

**THE AMERICAN BRESLOV PIONEER**

**The Life and Legacy of  
Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, z"l**

By Debbie Shapiro

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## Prologue

### 1920

FINALLY IT WAS STILL. The silence was eerie, overwhelming. It was a silence that echoed from the city across the vast plains to their hiding place near the riverbed. It was a silence that screamed for revenge.

The year was 1920, just three years after the October 1917 Russian Revolution. The continent was in turmoil—governments were changing and rulers were being overthrown at a dizzying pace. In the Ukraine, over fifty thousand workers and peasants had joined together to form the Ukrainian Revolutionary Insurrection Army. Their goal: to liberate their beloved homeland from Bolshevik domination.

They were known as Makhnovists after their leader, Nestor Makhno—or, more commonly, “Bandits” after their behavior. The ragged Ukrainian Revolutionary Insurrection Army was fueled by endless bottles of vodka and a raging, all-encompassing hatred of the money-hungry landlords, industrialists, entrepreneurs and, most of all, what they perceived as the source of all evil—the Jews. As they “liberated” city after city, they left a tragic path of murder and destruction behind them.

When Reb Yisrael Abba Rosenfeld heard that the Bandits were headed toward his hometown, the beautiful Ukrainian city of Kremenchug, he grabbed his wife, Liba Leah, and their infant daughter, Breina Devora, and fled to the river. From their hiding place, the Rosenfelds were able to see the clouds of dust made by the hooves of hundreds of horses as the brutal Bandits entered the city. They saw the smoke of the burning synagogue, and although they could not hear the terror-filled screams, they shuddered at the thought of what was

happening to their brethren who had stubbornly remained behind to safeguard their homes and businesses.

Reb Yisrael Abba was a well-to-do businessman, the owner of a profitable lumber mill and a prominent member of the large, well-organized Breslov community in Kremenchug. When he fled the city, he left with the knowledge that he would return to nothing. He had heard about the destruction the Makhnovists had wrought in other cities. He held no illusions, entertained no false hopes.

SEVERAL HOURS HAD PASSED since Reb Yisrael Abba and Liba Leah had observed, with bated breath, the cloud of dust that followed the horses as they exited the city. Most of the fires were extinguished. It was time to return.

Liba Leah was the first to enter the city. Leaving her husband and infant behind, she made her way across the fields quietly, almost stealthily. She walked briskly through the non-Jewish areas of Kremenchug and entered what had once been the teeming streets of the Jewish quarter. But now there was nothing—nothing but silence, silence and smoke. In a daze, Liba Leah walked along the empty streets, eyeing the corpses that seemed to be everywhere. She hoped that the members of her family had managed to escape before the Makhnovists ransacked her beloved hometown. Occasionally she bumped into other survivors, who were also desperately searching for family members.

She discovered the mutilated body of her brother-in-law, Reb Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, lying in the middle of the street. Anguished from all that they had lost, yet thankful to be alive, Reb Yisrael Abba and Liba Leah buried Zvi Aryeh and left Kremenchug with their daughter. They never returned.

The Rosenfelds moved halfway across Eastern Europe to the port city of Gdynia, Poland. Two years later, on 16 Shevat 5682 (February 14, 1922), Liba Leah gave birth to a son. They named him Zvi Aryeh.



## What's in a Name?

Rabbeinu *zal* speaks about the name a person is given when he is born, how that comes about, and the significance of a person's name. Many times, it's taken very lightly. There are some who seem to change their names by giving themselves a nickname or receiving a nickname by others. In reference to the name itself that is given at the time of birth, this is not by coincidence.

As the Arizal says: When a child is born, the parents and the grandparents and the relatives sit down to discuss the selection of the name for that child. Each one thinks that he is going to rule, he is going to dominate, he or she is going to decide. The Arizal says that in Heaven, there is laughter at the ceremony of selecting a name, because the name is chosen in Heaven and the end result will be that they will inject the name that is wanted or decided in Heaven into the mastermind of the group, and that's the name the child will receive.

So save all the arguments, save all the friction. There are times when a rift is caused in a family because this one wanted a certain name and this other one rejected that name. They don't realize that the name is not decided by any one member of the family, it's decided in Heaven.



Rabbeinu *zal* says that there is a lot in a name. Just before saying the last sentence of the *Shemoneh Esrei*, "*Yehiyu leratzon imrei fi*," there's a custom to say a *pasuk* that contains the person's name, or that begins and ends with the first and last letters of his name. This is done to aid a person in remembering his name when he comes to the Heavenly court.

The first question that is thrown at a person when he comes there is: What is your name? Due to fright and fear, a person tends to forget his name. Therefore the *segulah* is to say this special *pasuk* with letters that begin and end

with his name, and this will help him to remember it and not forget it at that time.

However, Rabbeinu *zal* says, let's understand about the name itself. We could tell about the character of a person by knowing his name. Rabbeinu *zal* selected, for example, one of his closest *talmidim*, who was his first official *talmid*. His name was Reb Shimon. Reb Shimon is buried in Tzfas, just below the grave of the Arizal. Rabbeinu *zal* said about Reb Shimon that he was very holy and very pure, and his name represented his purity. Thus, the letters of the name *ShiMON* (שמעון) form the words *AVoN MaSh* (עון מש). *Avon mash* means he removed himself from all types of sin, he had no sins whatsoever.

Rabbeinu *zal* stressed that the name Shimon is common. There are many who have that name besides his *talmid*. Do not think for a moment that this name Shimon, which contains the two words *avon mash*, applies to everyone whose name is Shimon. It applied only to his *talmid*, while others have different combinations made up of this name. You can have a person who is bad with that name, too.

It takes a tzaddik who knows the character of the person, the heart of the person, to be able to understand from the letters of the person's name to delve into the inner recess of that person's heart and soul, and know about that person.

***From Rabbi Rosenfeld's shiur on Sichos Haran #44***

## Chapter 1

### R' Zvi Aryeh the Yeshiva Student

**1922**

R' ZVI ARYEH was just six months old when he developed diphtheria. For more than two years, the Rosenfelds had been living in relative peace in Gdynia, having fled the Bandits' rampage of Kremenchug, their hometown. Now, once again, tragedy was knocking at their door.

Diphtheria, a disease of the respiratory tract, is extremely contagious. Although the diphtheria vaccination had already been invented, it was not in widespread use. Large numbers of children succumbed annually to the illness. The couple had been married for ten years before Hashem had blessed them with children—first their daughter, Breina Devora, and then, two years later, a son, Zvi Aryeh. Could it be that He had granted them this blessing only to snatch it away?

Reb Yisrael Abba was desperate. He realized that only a miracle could save his son. He grabbed the deathly-ill Zvi Aryeh and traveled three hundred miles to the tiny village of Radin, in Belarus. There he would seek the blessing of the generation's Torah leader, Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan, more commonly known by the title of his work as the Chofetz Chaim.

One can only imagine how difficult this journey must have been. Communication was primitive. Telephones were unheard of. Most probably, when Reb Yisrael Abba left Gdynia, he left with the knowledge that his young child might not survive the arduous trip. He could only hope—and pray—that the Chofetz Chaim would be at home, and that his infant son would live long enough to receive the tzaddik's blessing.

Reb Yisrael Abba and his son traveled by train and continued by carriage to the tiny village of Radin. Zvi Aryeh miraculously survived. The Chofetz Chaim blessed the child with the gift of life and gave him an additional name: Ben Tzion.<sup>1</sup>

So little R' Zvi Aryeh became R' Zvi Aryeh Ben Tzion—and lived. He had literally been snatched from the jaws of death. But although the family was intact, the Rosenfelds were destitute. Between the communists' nationalization of property and the Makhnovists' wanton destruction, nothing

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1 It is a common custom to give an additional name to a person who is critically ill.

was left of the Rosenfelds' former wealth. They had literally gone from riches to rags.

A year later, in 1923, the Rosenfelds left for America, in search of a new life far away from the bloody pogroms ravaging Eastern Europe.

### 1939

AT SEVENTEEN, R' Zvi Aryeh was an unassuming young man, not especially tall or short, clean-shaven, with short brown hair and keen brown eyes, when he entered Rabbi Avraham Yaffen's Yeshivas Beis Yosef Novardok in Boro Park. The yeshiva, a new incarnation of the original Beis Yosef Yeshiva in Bialystok, Poland, had only recently opened its doors. Its rosh yeshiva, Rabbi Avraham Yaffen, was the son-in-law of the Alter of Novardok, Rabbi Yosef Yozel Horowitz, zt"l, who had established the original Novardok Yeshiva in 1896. After the Bolshevik Revolution, Rabbi Yaffen had reestablished the yeshiva in Bialystok and then in Boro Park, when he arrived in America as a penniless refugee. The yeshiva was often referred to as the "Bialystok Yeshiva," a nod to its origins.

R' Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld was a scion of Breslover Chassidus, the son of Reb Yisrael Abba Rosenfeld, a Breslover chassid from the community of Kremenchug, which had boasted a strong and vibrant Breslov community before the war. Yet R' Zvi Aryeh's formal education was decidedly *litvish*.

As a child, he had attended Yeshivas Chaim Berlin under Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner's firm leadership. Undoubtedly, he was a good student, though his friends were more impressed by his talents in the schoolyard: he was the greatest handball player they'd ever seen. It was in high school—in Rabbi Shraga Mendlowitz's Yeshivas Torah Vodaath—that he found his true love: the study of Gemara. He plunged into his Torah studies with relish, learning practically around the clock. In Torah Vodaath, he discovered the *geshmak* of learning.

## Learning Torah with Hasmadah

Rabbeinu *zal* once spoke very strongly about learning Torah with *hasmadah*. He said to his students: Why don't you learn Torah with *ko'ach* also? Put effort, put energy, into learning. What can you lose?

Think what kind of an investment this is. You're investing an hour's time in the study of Torah. In this time, learn with *hasmadah*. You are going to get Gan Eden for this. For every word of Torah you learn, you have Gan Eden. Think of the benefit, think of the reward, think of the profits you have from the investment. You are investing an hour. At worst, you'll have Gan Eden for it, so at least you learned for the sake of profit. Go out and earn something. Earn a big chunk of Gan Eden for this hour.

Besides this, if you really learn with *hasmadah*, and you struggle and learn deeply, you are going to find an enjoyment, a pleasure in learning. You will find a bliss that is not found in this entire world. There's nothing physical that can compare to the pleasure of learning a page of Gemara deeply and understanding its depth. To feel the pain of a *kasha*, of a difficult question in the Gemara, and struggle with it until you find the answer. You enjoy the luxury of finding that this *kasha* has dissipated. You now understand the answer to it. This pleasure is so great.

What causes this pleasure? What's the origin of this pleasure? Rabbeinu *zal* brings the *Zohar Hakadosh* which says this is called the *ne'imus*, pleasantness, of the Torah. But first you have *menios*, obstacles. You try to learn and there is an obstacle: you don't understand the translation, the interpretation or the logic of a statement in the Gemara. Those are *menios*, obstacles, barriers. When you struggle very hard, you find the *MeNIOS* change to *NeIMOS*, pleasantness. How so?

The *Zohar Hakadosh* says that the Torah is like a *kallah*, a bride who is not yet married. As a *kallah*, she

cannot have contact with the *chassan* yet. She is already taken, she's betrothed. She cannot be seen by other men, so she stays in a room and waits while others pass by and the room stays closed. When her *chassan* passes by, she opens the door slightly for him to catch a glimpse of her, to enjoy seeing her for a fleeting moment. This arouses in him a desire to see more of her. It gives him pleasantness knowing what is ultimately in store for him.

This is what the Torah does. "Seek me out," the Torah says. "I will open the door a drop. You will understand, you will see some of the beauty and pleasantness of the Torah. If you continue to study the Torah, I'll open the door completely and you will become the master of this bride. You will become like a true *chassan* and *kallah*, finally in wedlock, where all the secrets are revealed." The Torah reveals its own secrets, the *sodos haTorah*, to those who work and struggle to make the Torah part of themselves.

This is the greatest reward a person can derive from the study of Torah. Not only does one get the Gan Eden, the reward that is ultimately due for every word of Torah he learns, but he also gets the deep-seated pleasure and bliss that comes with the study of Torah itself. A person enjoys every moment of delving so deeply into the Torah and seeing the endless depth and wisdom of Torah.

***From Rabbi Rosenfeld's shiur on Sichos Haran #17***

It is no wonder that when he arrived in the Bialystok Yeshiva, R' Zvi Aryeh became recognized as a diligent, brilliant Torah student—so much so that Rabbi Avraham Yaffan assigned his own son, Reb Yaakov Yaffan, as his learning partner.

And what of R' Zvi Aryeh's Breslov Chassidic roots?

In those days, Breslov was almost nonexistent in the United States. No schools taught Breslover Torah, and few knew of the Rosenfelds' ties to Breslov. But in the privacy of

his home, Reb Yisrael Abba Rosenfeld tried to inculcate his family with a strong Breslover identity.

And so, by the time he gained entry into Yeshivas Beis Yosef, R' Zvi Aryeh was an accomplished yeshiva student, educated both in Talmud and Breslov Chassidus. But during the seven years that he learned in the yeshiva, he fully immersed in the very Lithuanian *mussar* style of learning that the Novardok yeshiva offered and viewed Rabbi Avraham Yaffen as his rebbe. It was only later, when he met his father's rebbe, Rabbi Avraham Sternhartz, the head of the Breslover community in Eretz Yisrael, that R' Zvi Aryeh saw Breslov as his unique path in Divine service.

**R**abbi Rosenfeld often quoted the following *dvar Torah* from Rabbi Avraham Yaffen, z"l:

If a person fraudulently collects charity pretending he is poor, the punishment is that he will become poor. If one collects charity pretending he is blind, the punishment is that he will become blind. If a person collects charity pretending he is a tzaddik, the punishment will be that he will think he is a tzaddik and will never really advance.

*From Rabbi Rosenfeld's shiur on Halakhah*

The yeshiva viewed its students and faculty as royalty, and Rabbi Avraham Yaffen, with his imposing posture and royal bearing, was its prince. Everyone in the administration was meticulous about cleanliness, aware of the Torah scholar's responsibility to present a dignified appearance as Hashem's representative. This *hashkafah* was instilled in the *talmidim*, and R' Zvi Aryeh was to be noted for his neat appearance throughout his life.

R' Zvi Aryeh's *chavrusa* was not at all like his father, Rav Avraham. He was short, of slight build, and red-haired. But though he did not have the princely bearing of the rosh yeshiva, when he delivered a *shiur* you felt as if you were listening to a

giant twenty feet tall. R' Yaakov Yaffen was a brilliant young man, and he and R' Zvi Aryeh were well matched. In this world of spiritual giants, the other *talmidim* looked up to R' Zvi Aryeh, impressed by his incredible *hasmadah*, lightning-quick grasp of the material, photographic memory, and depth of understanding. All this earned him the appellation “the genius of Bialystok.”

## 1940

WORLD WAR II WAS RAGING, and Europe was literally in flames. The lucky ones managed to escape and rebuild their tattered lives. Even more fortunate were those living in a country where the war was distant, fought on faraway fronts.

While the American Jews didn't suffer through the Gehinnom of Europe, they were not unaffected. Young men were called up to join the Allied forces, putting their lives on the line to free the world of the threat of Nazi tyranny, while the yeshiva students fought the war on an entirely different front. As boys were being shipped overseas in droves, Jewish men were toiling around the clock, learning Torah to free the spiritual world of the impurities that were at the root of the tyranny.

The American government recognized the importance of theological seminaries and granted exemptions from military service to yeshiva students. But even after the government officially recognized the yeshiva as a rabbinical seminary, the yeshiva students had to undergo rigorous testing to receive their exemptions. The tests, administered by members of the left-wing, antireligious American Jewish Committee, involved questions on varied Torah subjects to prove that the students were indeed Torah scholars. Most of the men on the committee had grown up in Orthodox homes and had studied in a yeshiva, but later abandoned Torah observance. Needless to say, they were not on the yeshiva students' side. Any yeshiva student



who did not pass the committee's examination lost his draft exemption and was promptly conscripted into the United States Army.

One day, R' Zvi Aryeh noticed that one of his friends was looking extremely pale.

"What's the matter?" R' Zvi Aryeh asked. He was greeted with silence. The boy was too nervous to speak.

"Tell me," he persisted. "Maybe I can help."

The other boy relented. "I just took the test to get my draft exemption. I thought I was doing okay, but I realized afterward that I made a terrible mistake. I misinterpreted a quote and answered some of the questions wrong. My draft notice is probably in the mail right now," he said gloomily.

"What was the quote?"

The boy recited the quote and his explanation. "I guess I was so nervous I wasn't thinking straight."

R' Zvi Aryeh smiled. "You've got nothing to worry about! Rabbeinu Yonah explains it just that way, and I can prove it. I'm going to call the committee right now."

The other boy's good cheer was restored as it dawned on him that he might get his draft exemption after all.

R' Zvi Aryeh immediately contacted one of the committee members and set up a meeting. He showed them that the student's interpretation was correct and then accused the committee of not being learned enough to examine the yeshiva students. The committee members feared that Congress would hear about this episode and fire them, in which case they would lose their draft exemptions.

"Here's what we're going to do," R' Zvi Aryeh informed them. "I promise not to tell anyone about your mistake if you promise to make sure that all the students at the yeshiva will not be subjected to your questioning regarding their rabbinical exemptions."

The committee members agreed, and the Beis Yosef yeshiva students were able to continue learning undisturbed for the duration of the war.

## 1945

IT HAD BEEN SIX YEARS since R' Zvi Aryeh stepped through the doors of Yeshivas Beis Yosef, and the time had come for him to make some decisions.

One day, R' Zvi Aryeh and his *chavrusa*, Rabbi Yaakov Yaffen, were discussing the matter of *parnasah*, and the conversation turned to R' Zvi Aryeh's prospects.

"I know that I want to earn my living," he declared, "though I don't know yet what will be my chosen profession. I do know one thing: I'll do anything, even the most menial labor, but I'll never go into business."

"No? Why is that?"

"It's impossible to run a business without ever taking advantage of the customer," R' Zvi Aryeh asserted. "I won't put myself into a situation where I might have to cheat someone. Nothing is worth that—not all the money in the world."

Raised on the knees of the Great Depression, R' Zvi Aryeh was adamant that a person must earn his own way in this world. He was extremely particular to never—ever—take something that did not belong to him and to pay for everything in full. Rabbi Yaakov Yaffen, who by then was giving a regular *shiur* in the yeshiva, was so impressed by his *chavrusa's* honesty that he said, "*Im yirtzeh Hashem, ich gei duss ibur zogen in shiur morgen*—God willing, I will repeat this in my *shiur* tomorrow."

At first, R' Zvi Aryeh considered becoming a *shochet*, a ritual slaughterer. He sat and learned the *halakhos* of *shechitah*, both complex and numerous, until he was ready to apply what he had learned. Soon after, he went with his rosh yeshiva to a slaughterhouse to watch the *shochtim* in action. Two *shochtim*

were working that night—one had a beard, and the other was clean-shaven. R' Zvi Aryeh followed Rav Avraham as he checked the *chalif*, the knife, of the bearded *shochet*.

“Uh-huh,” Rav Avraham murmured.

Then Rav Avraham turned to check the *chalif* of the clean-shaven individual. “Uh-huh,” he murmured again.

When they left, Rabbi Yaffen turned to R' Zvi Aryeh and said, “*Fort ess iz der chalefvus shecht, un nisht der bord*—It is still the blade that slaughters, and not the beard.”

It seemed that the bearded *shochet's* knife had not passed muster with Rav Avraham. R' Zvi Aryeh spent the night at the slaughterhouse watching the *shochtim* work, and saw why the *shochet's* knife was not as sharp as it should be.

Thursday was market day, when people came and bought chickens for Shabbos, which meant there were a lot of chickens to slaughter on Wednesday night to meet the heavy demand. So although it's preferable that *shochtim* check their knives prior to slaughtering each individual chicken, the *shochtim* were not expected to check their knives very often—only after every five or ten chickens. In addition, before checking the knives, they plunged them into blocks of wood, which could render the knife unfit for *shechitah*. If a blemish would be found on the *chalif*, it could be blamed on the fact that the knife had been plunged into the wood, *de facto* rendering the chickens kosher.

That decided it for R' Zvi Aryeh. When he saw the immense pressure that a *shochet* was under to produce a large number of kosher chickens, he realized that *shechitah* was not for him. He wasn't prepared to compromise his principles in his search for a livelihood.

*Shechitah* was not the only career that R' Zvi Aryeh was pursuing. This was an era when yeshiva students also went to college, and he was taking night classes to earn an accounting degree. He enrolled in a six-month course that allowed a student

to earn his degree on a fast track by doing simultaneous self-study and home assignments. He tackled the course with his usual gusto and completed the work in record time, handing in completed assignments on a daily basis. The teacher, who had to spend hours reviewing the work every day, was annoyed by R' Zvi Aryeh's rapid progress and told him to slow down. Moreover, at this pace, R' Zvi Aryeh would finish the degree before the six months were up, and the school would lose out on tuition.

He did, indeed, finish the course before the six months were over—the whole thing took him all of three weeks to complete. The professor was incredulous and angry.

When the professor handed him his final grade, R' Zvi Aryeh received a badly marked-up paper, with red ink written all over it. R' Zvi Aryeh looked at the mark—he had received a 98, an almost perfect score. He had made just one tiny mistake: in accounting, all totals must be marked with a double underline, and in one place he mistakenly marked a total with a single underline. The paper was otherwise perfect, but the teacher took his revenge on this student who irritated him so much by making the paper look bad and marking it up with red ink.

It didn't matter. He had passed the course, and in record time. And what of his tuition? He felt it only fair that they refund his money, since he had attended the school for less than a month. So far he had paid for a month's tuition, and after the trouble the professor had given him, he decided to ask them to return the week's worth that he hadn't used.

R' Zvi Aryeh went down the office and made his request.

"This is unprecedented," they sputtered. "No one has ever finished the course so quickly, and we don't give refunds."

"That's a shame," said R' Zvi Aryeh, determined to win his case, "because you owe me a week's worth of courses. I paid for a month of studies and used only three weeks of it."

They relented and said, “Fine, here’s what we’re going to do. You can attend any course of your choice until the end of the month. You’ll get your money’s worth, and we won’t have to compromise our policy of no refunds.”

R’ Zvi Aryeh chose typing. In one week, he became a proficient typist, and even years later he could still recite every letter as it appeared on the keyboard.

## Did You Conduct Your Affairs with Faith?

**T**he Gemara tells us that when a person comes before the Heavenly court, he must give an account of himself. He was sent to this world to live a certain number of years. Whether he lives the entire seventy years or whether his life was cut off at an earlier date, he must appear before the Heavenly court, where every person must answer six basic questions.

These six questions correspond to the six divisions of the Mishnayos. The first section is *Zera’im*. *Zera’im* deals with vegetation, that which we actually live on. The second section is *Mo’ed*, holidays. The third is *Nashim*, which are laws about women, marriage and so on. The fourth is *Nezikin*, which deals with damages to property or dealings among people who are businessmen. The fifth is *Kodshim*, sacrifices in the Beis HaMikdash. And the sixth is *Taharos*, purity, to avoid that which is contaminating and impure.

Corresponding to these six, there are six questions asked in the Heavenly court. The first question is “*Nasasa venasata be’emunah?*” Did you conduct your affairs in life with faith? Did you have faith in Hashem that it wasn’t your ability, or your knowledge and your greatness that created a livelihood for you? It was the kindness of Hashem. Because if Hashem wants, the smartest person in the world could starve; the greatest company in the world could go bankrupt. If Hashem wants, the simplest person

can make a fortune out of rags. *Parnasah*, livelihood and money, comes from Hashem. Did you have the faith that the *zera'im*, the food that grew which was given to you to live on, came from Hashem?

*From Rabbi Rosenfeld's shiur on Sichos Haran #5*

BY THE TIME he was twenty-three, R' Zvi Aryeh had completed *Shas* (the entire Talmud) twice. During much of this time, he was also taking night classes to earn his accounting degree and helping out in his father's dry-goods store on the Lower East Side. In addition to R' Zvi Aryeh's heavy learning schedule and diplomatic efforts on behalf of his fellow yeshiva students, he was active in Vaad Hatzala, the organization that helped Jews in Europe escape the Holocaust and afterward find refuge in Israel.

In 1945, Rabbi Avraham Yaffen and Rabbi Hershel Stollman, the two roshei yeshiva of Yeshivas Beis Yosef, granted twenty-three-year-old Zvi Aryeh *semichah*, rabbinical ordination. He was one of only five students in the yeshiva to receive *semichah* directly from Rav Avraham.

After receiving his rabbinical ordination, Rabbi Rosenfeld's friends and mentors advised him to obtain a doctorate. If he wanted to find a decent job, a degree in higher education was the ticket. It would be a simple matter: several universities were granting students with rabbinical ordination almost the full credit for a Ph.D. Fulfilling the requirements for a doctorate would involve minimal effort.

Rabbi Rosenfeld decided against it. In the course of his studies of Breslover Torah, he had learned that Rebbe Nachman often spoke against the study of philosophy. He couldn't in good conscience do something that was so opposed to the Breslov outlook. "How can I go to the Next World proudly bearing the title 'Doctor of Philosophy'?" he told his friends.

But there was still the question of what he would do to earn a living. Business was out, as was *shechitah*. He was still studying accounting—but Rabbi Yaffen had different plans for him.

The rosh yeshiva saw in his *talmid* the potential to be a successful educator, capable of disseminating Torah. His talents and brilliance in Torah would be wasted in accounting. Rabbi Yaffen began to tutor his protégé privately, teaching him how to convey the Torah he learned to others. R' Zvi Aryeh decided to discontinue his pursuit of an accounting career and learn full-time with the goal of entering the rabbinical field.

The decision was made, and a teacher was born.

### One's Rabbi Can Live in Both Worlds

This, Rabbeinu *zal* says, is the duty of every person on earth. A person should strive for what Moshe Rabbeinu accomplished, leaving behind both a son and a student, both with perfection. Even a tzaddik who passes away and goes to Gan Eden has not fulfilled his duty and mission. A righteous person should be alive not in one world but in two. This was the prayer of David Hamelekh. His major *tefillah* was “*agura becha olamim*,” Hashem, allow me and help me to live in both of Your worlds, *Olam Hazeh* and *Olam Habo*, simultaneously.

How does a person do that?

Rabbeinu *zal* says when a person passes away, he continues to live through his students. If he has given Torah to his students, that means he has given them part of his *ruach*, spirit, and continues to live on in those students. When they study Torah in the name of their Rabbi, this means that he is still living on in this world though he is actually in Gan Eden. Their Rabbi then lives in both worlds.

But that is not enough. A person cannot be satisfied, cannot fulfill his duty by just having students. The first *mitzvah* of the Torah is for a person to leave behind children. A person leaves behind a son in this world, this son represents him. He continues to live on this world through his son.

Now, Rabbeinu *zal* says that is still not enough. A person should strive to see to that it is not just a son whom he leaves behind, but that the son should also be a student. You have a son and you have the *mitzvah* “*VeLimadatem osam,*” teach your son Torah so he becomes your son and your student. You make your son reach perfection. When a person has a student, he must also make that student into a son. Meaning, bring him so close, with such devotion, teach him so much, that you fulfill what the Gemara says, “*Hamelamed ben chaveiro Torah keilu yoldo,*” one who teaches a person Torah, it’s as if he gives birth to him. The *talmid* becomes like a son to his Rabbi.

And we find this shown in the case of close *talmidim*. Elisha Hanavi cried out, “*Avi, avi,*” my father, my father, when his Rabbi, Eliyahu Hanavi, left and went to Heaven. He was a student who also reached the higher level of a son.

This is what a person should strive for, the category of Moshe Rabbeinu who left behind a Rebbi Eliezer, a Rebbi Yehoshua, who each possessed the qualities of both a son and a student.

May we be *zokheh* to shortly fulfill this Heavenly advice and see with our eyes the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash, and the return of all Bnei Yisrael to Eretz Yisrael, *bimheira b’yameinu amen v’amen.*

***From Rabbi Rosenfeld’s shiur on  
Ein Yaakov, Bava Basra 74***





*Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld*



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שיחות הר"ן

שיח  
הנשמה

עם פירוש

משיעוריו של הרב"ח הרב צבי אריה רוזנפלד ז"ל

שיחות הר"ן  
הרב צבי אריה רוזנפלד ז"ל



מתוך ספרו 'שיחות הר"ן' חלק א' עמ' 100-101

שיחות הר"ן



## שיח הנשמה

פירוש על שיחות הר"ן  
משיעוריו של הרה"ח ר' צבי אריה רוזנפלד ז"ל

כרך ב

מתורגם וערוך על ידי  
שאל מזרחי

## הקול הוא בְּרָכָה מֵהַשֵּׁם

רַבְּנוּ ז"ל אומֵר שֶׁהָאָדָם הַתְּבַרְךָ בְּקוֹל. הַשֵּׁם חָנַן אֶת הָאָדָם בְּחֻכְמָה וְקוֹל. בְּשִׂיחָה הַקּוֹדֶמֶת רַבְּנוּ ז"ל דָּבַר עַל חֻכְמָה, שֶׁהִיא בְּסִפְרוֹת הָעֲלִיוֹנוֹת. כְּעַת הוּא מְדַבֵּר עַל הַקּוֹל, זֶעַר אֲנִפּוּי, שֶׁהוּא שֵׁשׁ הַסִּפְרוֹת הַתַּחְתּוֹנוֹת שֶׁנִּקְרְאוֹת 'קוֹל'. יֵשׁ סוּגִים שׁוֹנִים שֶׁל קוֹלוֹת. לְאֵלֶּה יֵשׁ קוֹל 'סוּפְרוֹן', לְאַחֲרִים קוֹל 'טְנוּר' וְלְאַחֲרִים קוֹל 'בֵּס'. לְאֵלֶּה קוֹל קָשָׁה וְלְאַחֲרִים קוֹל רַךְ וְעָרֵב. כָּל הַקּוֹלוֹת הָאֵלֶּה הֵם קוֹלוֹת אָנוּשִׁים רְגִילִים. אָבָל כְּשֶׁאָדָם מְדַבֵּר עִם הַשֵּׁם, כְּשֶׁהוּא מִתְפַּלֵּל, יֵשׁ סוּג אַחֵר שֶׁל קוֹל, קוֹל הַתְּפִלָּה.

לְגַבִּי הַתְּפִלָּה עֲצָמָה יֵשׁ מְנַהֲגִים שׁוֹנִים בֵּין קְבוּצוֹת שׁוֹנוֹת. הַבְּעַל שֵׁם טוֹב הָיָה הַרְבֵּי הָרֵאשׁוֹן לְכֹלֵהָאָדָמוֹ"רִים הַחֲסִידִים שֶׁאֲחֲרָיו. וְאָף עַל פִּי שֶׁהוּא הָיָה רַבִּי אֶחָד, וְהִיטָה לוֹ דֶּרֶךְ אַחַת וַיְחִידָהּ, תַּלְמִידָיו הָיוּ חֲלוּקִים בְּהִרְבֵּה תַּחוּמִּים, וּבִינֵיהֶם צוּרַת הַתְּפִלָּה. הָיָה אֵלֶּה שֶׁהַתְּפִלָּלוּ בְּשִׁקְט מְחֻלָּט עַד שֶׁהָיָה אֶפְשָׁר לְשָׁמַע נְפִילָה שֶׁל מַחַט. אַחֲרֵים הִגְבִּיהוּ קוֹלָם וְצָעְקוּ לְהַשֵּׁם בְּכָל כַּחַס. הַקּוֹל שְׁלִי צוּעֵק לְהַשֵּׁם, זוֹעֵק לְעִזְרָה, כָּל עֲצָם בְּגוּפֵי עוֹזֶרֶת לִי לְצַעֵק, בְּבַחֲיִנַת "כָּל עֲצָמוֹתֵי תֵּאמְרָנָה" (תהלים לה, י). כִּי אֲנִי יוֹדָע כְּמָה נִפְשִׁי חוֹלָה וְכְמָה עִזְרָה הִיא צְרִיכָה. לָכֵן אֲנִי צוּעֵק לְהַשֵּׁם: עִזֹּר לִי, סִיעֵ לִי, רַפֵּא אוֹתִי.

## יֵשׁ צָעָקָה לְלֵא קוֹל

הַקּוֹל הַזֶּה שֶׁל תְּפִלָּה, בֵּין אִם הוּא נִמוּךְ וּבֵין אִם הוּא חָזָק, הוּא הַקּוֹל הַרְגִיל שֶׁהָאָדָם נִיחַן בּוֹ. הַקּוֹל מִתְחִיל בְּרֵאוֹת, מִשֵּׁם יוֹצֵא כַח הָרוּחַ שֶׁעוֹבֵר דֶּרֶךְ בֵּית הַקּוֹל וַיּוֹצֵא מִהֶפֶה. קוֹלוֹת שׁוֹנִים נּוֹצְרִים עַל יְדֵי הַלְשׁוֹן, הַחֹף, הַשְּׁפָתִים, הַשְּׁנַיִם וְהַגְּרוֹן, הַמְּכַנִּים בְּזֶהָר הַקְּדוּשׁ (פִּינַחֵס, רַכּוּז-רַכּוּחַ). 'חֻמְשַׁת מוֹצְאוֹת הַפֶּה', חֻמְשָׁה מְקוּרוֹת שֶׁל הַקּוֹלוֹת הַשׁוֹנִים שֶׁל הָאֵל"ף-ף-בֵּי"ת. כָּל הַחֻלְקִים הָאֵלֶּה מִיְצָרִים אֶת הַקּוֹל, אָבָל הוּא מִתְחִיל בְּרֵאוֹת. רַבְּנוּ ז"ל אומֵר שֶׁאֶפְשָׁר לְצַעֵק בְּקוֹל גְּבוֹה כָּל כֶּף שֶׁאָף אֶחָד לֹא יוּכַל לְשָׁמַע אוֹתוֹ, וְבוֹ בְּזִמָּן זֶה הַקּוֹל הַחָזָק בְּיוֹתֵר שֶׁאֶפְשָׁר לְהִשְׁמִיעַ.

## שיחות הרן ■ סימן טז

ע, שִׁיכוֹלִין לַצֶּעֶק בְּקוֹל דְּמָמָה דְּקָה בְּצַעְקָה גְּדוֹלָה  
מְאֹד וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע שׁוּם אָדָם כָּלֵל, כִּי אֵינוֹ מוֹצִיא שׁוּם  
קוֹל כָּלֵל, רַק הַצֶּעֶקָה הִיא בְּקוֹל דְּמָמָה דְּקָה, וְזֶה יוֹכֵל כָּל  
אָדָם. דְּהֵינּוּ שְׂיָצִיר בְּמַחְשַׁבְתּוֹ הַצֶּעֶקָה, וְיִכְנֵס קוֹל הַצֶּעֶקָה  
בְּמַחְשַׁבְתָּהּ, וְיָצִיר בְּדַעְתּוֹ קוֹל הַצֶּעֶקָה מִמֶּשׁ עִם הַנְּגוּן, כְּדֶרֶךְ  
שְׂצוּעֵקִין. וְיִכְנֵס בְּזֶה עַד שְׂיִצְעַק מִמֶּשׁ, בְּבַחֲיִנַת קוֹל דְּמָמָה  
דְּקָה, וְשׁוּם אָדָם לֹא יִשְׁמַע כָּלֵל:

כִּי בְּאֶמְת אֵינוֹ צִיור כָּלֵל רַק צַעְקָה מִמֶּשׁ. כִּי יֵשׁ  
סְמִפּוֹנוֹת בְּרָאָה שְׂמִשָּׁם יוֹצֵא הַקוֹל, וְגַם יֵשׁ סְמִפּוֹנוֹת דְּקִים  
הַיוֹצֵאִים מִן הָרָאָה אֶל הַמּוֹחַ, וְעַל כֵּן יְכוֹלִים לְהַכְנִיס הַקוֹל  
דְּרָךְ הַסְּמִפּוֹנוֹת הַדְּקִים הַהוֹלְכִים אֶל הַמּוֹחַ, עַד שְׂיִצְעַק  
מִמֶּשׁ בְּמַחוֹ עַל יְדֵי מַה שְׂמִצִּיר בְּמַחְשַׁבְתּוֹ קוֹל הַצֶּעֶקָה  
מִמֶּשׁ, שְׂבִזָּה הוּא מְכַנֵּס קוֹל הַצֶּעֶקָה אֶל הַמּוֹחַ, וְיוֹכֵל לְעַמּוֹד  
בֵּין כַּמָּה בְּנֵי אָדָם וְיִצְעַק מְאֹד וְשׁוּם אָדָם לֹא יִשְׁמַע כְּנִ"ל.  
וְלִפְעָמִים יוֹכֵל לְהַשְׁמִיט מְזָה אֵיזָה קוֹל דַּק שְׂיִהִיָּה נִשְׁמָע,  
כִּי מַחְמַת שְׂנִכְנֵס הַקוֹל דְּרָךְ הַסְּמִפּוֹנוֹת שֶׁל הַמּוֹחַ אֶל  
הַמּוֹחַ, יוֹכֵל לְהַשְׁמִיט לִפְעָמִים שְׂיִצֵּא הַקוֹל דְּרָךְ הַסְּמִפּוֹנוֹת  
הַמוֹצִיאִין קוֹל, אֲבָל הוּא בְּדַקּוֹת גְּדוֹל:

וּבְלֹא דְבוּר (הֵינּוּ כְּשֵׁאִין מוֹצִיאִים שׁוּם דְבוּר בְּשַׁעַת  
הַצֶּעֶקָה הַנְּזָכָר לְעִיל) קַל יוֹתֵר לַצֶּעֶק כְּנִ"ל, כִּי כְּשִׁצְרִיךְ  
לְהוֹצִיא הַדְּבוּר קִשָּׁה יוֹתֵר לְתַפֵּס אֶת הַקוֹל אֶל הַמַּחְשַׁבָּה  
וְלִבְלִי לְהַנִּיחוֹ לְצֵאת דְּרָךְ הַקְּנָה הַמוֹצִיא קוֹל, אֲבָל בְּלֹא  
דְבוּר קַל יוֹתֵר:

הקול, וְהִיא הָאֲחֵרוֹנָה הִיא מְלֻכּוֹת שֶׁהִיא דְבוּר, מְלֻכּוֹת — פֶּה. האותיות הן אַרְבַּע, אֲבֵל הַשֵּׁם הוּא אֶחָד.

לְכֹן מִי שֶׁיְכוּל לַעֲלוֹת לַמְדֻרָּה שֶׁבָּהּ הוּא מִבֵּין שֶׁהַשֵּׁם הוּא אֶחָד וְכָל אַרְבַּע הָאוֹתוֹת מְשֻׁלְבוֹת כְּאֶחָד, הַגִּיעַ לַמְדֻרָּה שֶׁאֵין כְּמוֹהָ, לְרִמָּה עֲלִיוֹנָה בְיוֹתֵר. הוּא מִמַּזְג אֶת הַשֵּׁם לְאֶחָד, כְּבִיכּוֹל. זֶה נִקְרָא לְהַעֲלוֹת זְעֵר אֲנָפִין לְחֻכְמָה. הוּא "ו עוֹלָה וְנִבְלַעַת בְּיַד יו"ד וְה"א". וְזֶה מֵה שֶׁאוֹמֵר רַבְּנוּ ז"ל, שֶׁבְּמִקּוֹם לְיַחַד אֶת הַקּוֹל עִם הַפֶּה וְלִיצוֹר דְבוּר, מַעֲלִים אֶת הַקּוֹל לַמּוֹחַ, לְחֻכְמָה, לְמַחְשָׁבָה. לְכֹן הַקּוֹל הִזָּה גְּבוּהָ יוֹתֵר מִקּוֹל שֶׁיּוֹצֵא מִהַפֶּה, כִּי זֶה קוֹל שֶׁמְקַשֵּׁר לְמַחְשָׁבָה. הַקּוֹל, שֶׁהוּא הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁהוּא שֵׁם 'מָה', עוֹלָה וְהוֹפֵף לְחֻכְמָה.<sup>1</sup> חֻכְמָה הִיא 'כַּח מָה'. הַכַּח שֶׁמֵּאֲחֻרָי ה'מָה' הוּא הַחֻכְמָה שֶׁמִּמֶּנָּה 'מָה' נוֹצֵר, וְזֶה הַמְקוֹר הָאֲמִתִּי שֶׁל הַקּוֹל הִזָּה, הַקּוֹל שֶׁיּוֹצֵא מִהַמַּחְשָׁבָה, ה'כַּח מָה', וּמְקַשֵּׁר אֵלֶיהָ.

חֲשׁוּב לְהַדְגִּישׁ שֶׁאֵם נִשְׁאֵל אֵיזוֹ דְרָף נְכוּנָה, הָאֵם לְהַתְפַּלֵּל בְּשִׁקְטָה אוּ בְּקוֹל חֲזָק, לְהַשְׁקִיעַ כַּח וְאֲנִרְגִּיהָ בְּתוֹךְ הַתְּפִלָּה עַד שֶׁמִּזְעִיעִים מִהִמָּאֲמִץ הַפִּיִּסִי שֶׁהַשְׁקִיעַ, רַבְּנוּ ז"ל הִיא אוֹמֵר שֶׁמָּה שֶׁמְדַבֵּר בְּשִׁיחָה זֹו מֵתְאִים רַק לְהַתְּבוֹדְדוֹת, וְאוֹלֵי תְּפִלַּת שְׁמוֹנָה עֶשְׂרֵה. שְׁמוֹנָה עֶשְׂרֵה נִקְרָאת תְּפִלַּת לַחֹשׁ, תְּפִלָּה שֶׁקֵּטָה שֶׁבָּהּ אֵין נוֹתְנִים לְשׁוֹם קוֹל לְצֵאת מִהַפֶּה. שְׁמוֹנָה עֶשְׂרֵה חֵיבֵת לְהִיּוֹת שֶׁקֵּטָה לְגִמְרֵי. שׁוֹם קוֹל לֹא יֵצֵא מִהַפֶּה אֶפְלוּ לְאֲזִנֵי עֲצָמוֹ, גַּם אִם אֵין אֶף אֶחָד בְּטוֹחַ שְׁמִיעָה (זֶהר וִיגֵשׁ, רט:). אֲבֵל בְּשֶׂאֵר הַתְּפִלָּה נִכּוֹן לְהַתְּפַלֵּל בְּכַח. לֹא בְּעֲצָלוֹת וּבְרַפְיוֹן אֶלָּא לְהַתְּפַלֵּל בְּעֲרֻנוֹת וּבְכַח, לְהוֹצִיא אֶת קוֹלוֹ לְשִׁבַח אֶת הַשֵּׁם. "כִּפֵּד אֶת הַשֵּׁם מִגְּרוֹנָה" (עֵין רַש"י מִשְׁלִי ג, ט), לְתַת לְגֵרוֹן לְהוֹצִיא אֶת הַכַּח שֶׁל הַקּוֹל.

1 לאורך הזהר הקדוש הביטוי "קודשא בריך הוא" מתייחס לזער אנפין.

איך מיצרים צעקה חזקה שאינה נשמעת? יש סמפונות בראות, צנורות שמתחברים לבית הקול והפה. כשאדם צועק בצורה הרגילה, כח הרוח עובר בצנורות אלו לפה, ונוצר קול. אבל צנורות אלו גם מתחברים לצנורות שמובילים למח, כך שבמקום ליצאת מהפה, כח הרוח עולה למח, ולא נשמע קול פיסי. עם זאת המח יכול ליצור, לדמיון ולהרגיש צעקה חזקה יותר ממה שנשמע בדרך כלל. הצעקה מרגשת במח, אף שום קול אינו נשמע באזני האנשים מסביב.

כשאדם מתבודד, הוא רוצה לדבר עם השם בצנעה. לדבר עם השם בשקט אינו מעורר אותו לתפלה. הרמה הרוחנית הנוכחית שלו גורמת לו כל כך הרבה כאב, עד שהוא רוצה לצעק בכל כחו להשם. אבל הוא נמצא בין אנשים והוא מתבייש. רבנו ז"ל אומר שהוא יכול לצעק דרך המח, כך שמחו ירגיש וישמע את הצעקה, אבל שום אדם מסביב לא ישמע. בדרך זו הוא יכול לבטא את הרגשות העמוקים ביותר שלו ולשחרר את תסכולו בצעקתו להשם, ואף אחד לא ישמע אותו.

### צעקה ללא קול מקשרת למחשבה

הצעקה ללא קול הזאת היא קול עצמתי ויעיל מאוד, כי רבנו ז"ל אומר שאם אתה מתפלל ואתה מדבר ומוציא את המלים, המח נוטה לרחף. הסבה היא שקשה לקשר את המחשבה לדבור. קשה להתרכז במה שאתה מדבר. המח נוטה לנדד לתחומים שונים, לחשב על נושאים מעניינים המסיחים את הדעת, מה שקורה בתפלת שמונה עשרה, למשל. אבל אם האדם צועק במחו, הוא משתמש במח לצעקה עצמה. הוא משתמש בכל המח ואז המח אינו נודד לתחומים אחרים. בדרך זו הוא יכול לדבק במלים שהוא אומר ולהתרכז באמת ובשלמות בתפלה שהוא מתפלל להשם. זו תפלה זכה ואיכותית מאוד.

מזה אפשר להבין את הפרוש של דברי הזהר הקדוש ברמה גבוהה יותר: האותיות יו"ד וה"א משם הנ"ה הן חכמה ובינה. חכמה ובינה הן המח, כשחכמה היא החלק העליון של המח. הוא"ו היא

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REBBE  
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A COMMENTARY ON SICHOS  
RABBI ZVI ARYEH ROSENFELD Z"L

SICHOS  
RABBI  
VOL. 3



# REBBE NACHMAN'S SOUL

Compiled  
and edited  
by Rabbi  
Shlomo  
Katz

A COMMENTARY ON SICHOS HARAN FROM THE CLASSES OF  
RABBI ZVI ARYEH ROSENFELD Z"L

קובץ של אברות רוסנפלד ז"ל  
A COMMENTARY ON SICHOS HARAN FROM THE CLASSES OF

THE  
SOU



# **REBBE NACHMAN'S SOUL**

**A commentary on Sichos HaRan  
from the classes of  
Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, z"l**

Volume 3

Sichos 94-

Compiled and edited by  
Rabbi Shlomo Katz



## *Sichah 94*

**W**hen there is peace in a city, it is because there is no one there with intelligence.

We are taught, "If there is no knowledge, how can there be distinction?" (*Yerushalmi, Berakhot 39b*).

When a city possesses a truly intelligent person, then there is distinction and division. There are some who follow this person and others who oppose him.

*Sichos Haran 94*

### Wisdom—Separation

Rabbeinu *zal* says that if there is peace throughout a community of Jews, it's only because there is no intelligence in that city. Although peace is a very desirable state of affairs among the Jewish community, it is so rare that it is practically non-existent. Yet if there is a case where there is peace throughout a city, it's only because there is no intelligence in that city. There is not one person who is very learned, and very intelligent, and very clever. Since such a person is lacking, there is no dispute among the people living there.

The prayer *Atah Chonantanu* on *Motza'ei Shabbos* is a *tefillah* that separates the *Shabbos* from the weekday. The Gemara says that we pray that *tefillah* specifically in the *berakhah* that deals with wisdom. The Gemara says that the reason that the *tefillah* is mentioned there is because there can be *havdalah*, separation, you can discern between two items, only if you have *seikhel*, if you have intelligence. If there is no *da'as*, if there is no intelligence, you can never compare or separate two items. Therefore, if there is intelligence, then there is separation. If there is a person in the city who has this

wisdom, automatically there are separate opinions. Then you have those few who cling to this wise person. Automatically you have others who will argue and oppose the wisdom of this person. You will always have *machlokes* in the city.

When we say wisdom, we're not speaking about wisdom in playing cards, or wisdom in business. We are referring to wisdom in knowledge of Torah. We're speaking about a *talmid chakham*. The Gemara says that where you have two wise men living in a city, you will invariably find that these two wise men are always arguing about a *halakhah*. One says one way; the other will say the opposite way. They both mean well, yet they will very rarely, if ever, agree on a *din*. The reason is that when there is wisdom, there is *havdalah*, differences of opinion.

### Getting the *din* right

Rabbeinu *zal* says that there are some who attach themselves to this wise person, while the others will oppose him. You can have a *talmid chakham* who rules correctly, who will render a decision properly in Hebrew law, and fortunate are those who attach themselves to this *talmid chakham*. You can have another *talmid chakham* in this city who is very learned, and yet he will always will give the opposite decision, the wrong one. It's his lot to always give a decision in law that is wrong. Why so?

The Gemara says about David Hamelekh and Shaul Hamelekh that they were both complete and perfect tzaddikim. David Hamelekh was *zokheh* that whenever he said a *din*, he would hit the nail right on the head—he would get the exact *din* as it was supposed to be. Shaul Hamelekh would somehow give the opposite *din*. He would also give logical reasons in depth, but when it came to the *din*, he was the opposite.

We always find pairs of rabbis and sages in the Gemara, Tannaim and Amoraim who are always paired off, always arguing, discussing a *din*. One says that something is permissible, and the other says that it is forbidden. Somehow, they are always arguing about *dinim*. You very rarely find these

two rabbis agreeing on a *din*. The reason is that one of them was born under the star of *halakhah kemoso*, he always gets the *din* correctly. The other one is always the one who disputes this, argues against it, and the *din* is not like him.

When you have a wise person in the city, and you have more than one, then it is very fortunate for the person who seeks out the one who is both wise and *halakhah kemoso*, who finds a *talmid chakham* who always rules correctly, and attaches himself to that *talmid chakham*. Then he knows that he's being led correctly throughout. He will always follow the *din* as should be.

But this *machlokes*, this debate, is a very healthy one. When it comes to study of Torah, if you would not have these debates in the Gemara, you would lose all interest in the Torah. You would lose all understanding, all perception. It is these *makhlokos* which clarify the *din*.

We know that the light is discernible only through darkness. The *Zohar Hakadosh* says that if darkness had not been created, we would never be able to conceive the meaning of the word light. We wouldn't know that light existed. Because darkness was created, therefore we can understand the value of light.

The scientists' mistake

The Kabbalists say: Don't ever be misled into thinking as the scientists say, *chas v'shalom*, that darkness does not exist, that darkness is only the absence of light. Hashem created light, and they say that when the light is turned off, then you have the absence of light, which is darkness. That statement is absolutely false.

Hashem created darkness as well as light. The absence of light does not mean that there is darkness. When light is absent then darkness takes over, just as when the sun goes down the moon comes up, and when the day ends the night comes about. The absence of light and darkness is what existed before Creation; there was no darkness before Creation. Hashem created the darkness as well as the light.

# LIFE AFTER LIFE

Moshiach,  
Gan Eden  
and Resurrection  
of the Dead

From the classes of  
Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld z"l

LIFE AFTER LIFE

Rabbi  
Zvi Aryeh  
Rosenfeld



# **LIFE AFTER LIFE**

## **Moshiach, Gan Eden and the Resurrection of the Dead**

From the classes of  
Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, z"l

Compiled and edited by  
David Dombrowsky

*Kol yisrael yesh lahem chelek l'olam habo. Shene'emar, v'ameich kulam tzaddikim. Le'olam yirshu aretz, neitzer mato'ai ma'asei yodai l'hispo'er.*

The last *perek* in *Sanhedrin*, *perek chelek*, begins with a very famous sentence. This sentence prefaces every one of the chapters in *Pirkei Avos*, the Mishnah that we learn during the summertime. The first sentence reads: *Kol yisrael*, every Jew, *yesh lahem chelek l'olam habo*, has a portion in the future world, in the hereafter. *Shene'emar*, as the *pasuk* says, *v'ameich kulam tzaddikim*. How is it that every single Jew will have a portion in *Olam Habo*? Because Yeshayahu the Prophet says, “Your nation [of Jews] are all *tzaddikim*.” Hashem made the hereafter for *tzaddikim* and since all the Jews are *tzaddikim*, they will have a portion in the future world. *Le'olam yirshu aretz*, they will inherit this future world, *neitzer mato'ai ma'asei yodai l'hispo'er*. Hashem says, “This future world is My work and the product of My deed of which I’m very proud.”

This world and the future world

There are two products, this world and the future world. *Olam Haze*, this world, could be the product of man. Hashem created this world unfinished. The food that grows doesn’t grow in completed form. Wheat stalks must be threshed and fields must be worked, in addition to other steps of preparation before bread is baked and ready to eat. The clothing that we wear doesn’t grow on trees. It’s not produced or manufactured by Hashem. Hashem causes the earth to produce linen, flax and cotton, and then it’s man’s duty to complete these items. This world is *ma'asei yedei adam*, the work of man.

*Olam Habo*, the future world, is purely the work of Hashem. It’s a complete and perfect world. So the *resha'im*, those who



are evil, have their reward in this world, not the world where it's *ma'asei yodai*, the work of Hashem. That world is only for tzaddikim.

What portion does the Jew have?

Since the *pasuk* says that all Jews are tzaddikim, consequently every Jew has his portion in *Olam Habo*. This means that a Jew is born pure and his portion awaits him.

Of course it's possible, *chas v'shalom*, for a Jew to lose his portion. If he does evil, by committing sins, he can lose his *chelek*. At the same time, though, he still gets *Olam Habo*, because every Jew gets *Olam Habo*, even those who are bad. The sinful Jews are punished for their sins either during their lifetime or after they die, by going through a purification process. This process of suffering pays the penalty for their sins so they can emerge pure. The *neshamah*, the soul, is spiritual. In other words, it's like fire. The soul's fire becomes encased in another strange kind of fire, the fire of Gehinnom, where one fire purifies the other. It removes the stains and impurities from the fiery soul so when the soul emerges from this fire, it's pure and can go to Gan Eden, which is synonymous with *Olam Habo*.

Let's analyze this statement once more. *Kol yisrael*, every Jew, *yesh lahem chelek*, has a portion in Gan Eden. But we find, for example, the Gemara says that when Rabbeinu Hakadosh<sup>1</sup> was *nistalek*, he was so holy that a voice came from Heaven and said, "Everything must stop. The prevalent *mitzvah* now, taking preference over all other *mitzvos*, is to attend the funeral of Rabbeinu Hakadosh." Everyone went to this funeral, bar none. Then a voice came from Heaven and said that everybody who participated in this funeral was *mezuman*, assured, a place in Gan Eden. The *zechus* of Rabbeinu Hakadosh was so great

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1 Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi, the Chief Rabbi of the Jews at the time of the Mishnah.

that going to his funeral meant they received the tremendous light of his *neshamah*, which was doubled at the time, just like we find by the *histalkus* of Eliyahu Hanavi. So those who were present at his *histalkus* and funeral received this great light, which gave them their portion in Gan Eden as a guarantee.

What's the difference between this last story of the Gemara and our Mishnah, which says that every Jew anyhow has a portion? The answer is that our Mishnah means the Jew has his portion in Gan Eden. In order to get to Gan Eden, he might have to go through an unpleasant purification process. In the Gemara, it means that every Jew who was present at that funeral received the vast reward of going directly to Gan Eden without any cumbersome suffering beforehand.

On a deeper level

Let's deviate for a moment and explain the words of the Mishnah *alpi kabbalah*. We'll try to avoid using these kabbalistic terms later. But it's best to start with a solid foundation. I'm sure it will hurt no one. Certainly if we don't understand this too well, our *neshamos* truly understand it, and if we can't feel our *neshamah*, we can be sure that our *neshamos* are very thankful for words of this kind. The Arizal says these words are the greatest *ta'anug* for the *neshamah*. The Torah is an *eitz chayim*, a tree of life. Life for the *neshamah*, and especially this type of knowledge which reaches the *Olam Ha'Atzilus*, the highest of the heavens, is the most important *ta'anug* for the *neshamah*, as far as Torah is concerned.

Three hundred and ten worlds

The word used here is **yes** *lahem chelek l'olam habo*. Regarding the word *yes*, the *Zohar Hakadosh* says and the Arizal explains as follows: We have a Gemara later on that says, "The tzaddikim will inherit in Gan Eden *shai olamos*." The gematria of *Shai* (ש"י, *shin yod*) is 310. So the reward in Gan Eden is that every tzaddik will have 310 worlds. (Of course,

there are many explanations what this means, but it's beyond the scope of this *shiur*.) Regardless, the *pasuk* brought in that Gemara is "*lehanchil oihavai yesh*," Hashem says, "For those whom I love, or those who love Me, I have a special inheritance." The Gemara uses the word *yesh* (יֵשׁ, *yod shin*) in the *pasuk* to teach that there are 310 worlds, and that's why *yesh* is used here as well, *yesh lahem chelek l'olam habo*.

### The ten sefiros

Let's talk briefly about *Olam Habo*. This refers to the top level, far above our mental conception and far above anything physical. The *Zohar Hakadosh* says, as we know, there are ten *sefiros*. In their simplest form, the ten *sefiros* start with Keser, the Crown. The next *sefiros* are Chokhmah and Binah, followed by the seven lower *sefiros*. The lowest of the seven, or the tenth *sefirah* from the top, is called Malkhus. When we say, "*V'hoyo Hashem l'melekh al kol ha'aretz*," Hashem is King over the whole world, we're referring to His ruling power, the *malkhus* of the Shekhinah, the spirit of Hashem that rules.

### The King and the Crown

The *sefirah* of Keser has a special title. Keser is also called Ayin. Ayin literally means nothing. It's called nothing because it's so hidden from the conception of anything below it. Not only is it beyond human conception, but even the angels in Heaven, the highest of creation, can't understand what Keser is. It's so high above, next to Hashem Himself, that it's called Ayin, nothing, because from the vantage point of those below, the light is so bright that it seems like complete darkness.

The first *sefirah* of which there is something, so to speak, or where we have some understanding, is the *sefirah* of Chokhmah. This wisdom can be conceived, and therefore the *pasuk* says that "*hachokhmah me'ayin timotzei*," Chokhmah is derived from Ayin, from Keser. The Chokhmah itself which isn't Ayin is called *yesh me'ayin*. Chokhmah is called *yesh*, it's something that comes from nothing.

The lower *sefirah*, Malkhus, is called Ani, because it's the opposite extreme of Ayin. The same letters of AyIN (אין) are turned into ANI (אני), because going from Keser to Malkhus is going from the top extreme to the bottom extreme. Now, *kol yisrael yesh lahem chelek l'olam habo*, which means that a Jew can reach the highest level of Chokhmah, which is called *yesh*. There are no two tzaddikim in existence who are on the same level in *Olam Habo*. No two Jews are ever alike and no two tzaddikim are alike. It's impossible. But tzaddikim can reach this highest of all levels. They are free to go to that level of *yesh* and, of course, that level, too, has infinite levels above it to the Keser itself. But that's above us; we can't discuss it any further.

### The Garden of Eden

Although, says the Arizal, when we say "*yesh lahem chelek*," we can understand this a little, because we're referring to *Olam Habo* as Gan Eden, the Garden of Eden. It's called a spiritual garden. In the language of the *sefiros*, the Malkhus, the spirit of Hashem, with which the *neshamah* merges when it goes to Heaven, is also called the garden. "*Chakal tapuchin kadishin*," this *chakal*, this Garden of Eden, is the *chelek l'olam habo*. *CheLeK* (חלק, portion) and *ChaKaL* (חקל, garden) have the same letters. This is what's meant that everybody has a *chelek*. Everybody will go to this spiritual garden.

Why is this garden so special? Because there we have the purpose of creation. The purpose of our *mitzvos* is always to unite and to combine. For example, the primary *mitzvah* for a Jew is to complete himself. A Jew is half a person if he isn't married. When he merges with his mate, he becomes an *adam hasholeim*, a complete person. By doing *mitzvos*, a Jew is making this merging above, too. He's bringing about a merger of *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* and the Shekhinah, a King and a Queen.

The name of Hashem is *Yod Kei Vav Kei*. *Yod Kei* is in one respect a higher level of the Shekhinah, called Chokhmah and Binah, the King and Queen. *Vav Kei* is on a lower level. Each

one of these two pairs (*Yod Kei* and *Vav Kei*) has a special Name of Hashem associated with it. In the *Yod Kei*, we have the *Yod* which is *Shem Havaya, Yod Kei Vav Kei*. The letter *Kei* of the Shekhinah is called *Shem Ekyeh*, as Hashem said to Moshe Rabbeinu, “Tell the Jews that My Name is *Ekyeh*.” That *Yod Kei* combined gives you *Yod Kei Vav Kei* (26) plus *Ekyeh* (21), for a total of 47. Then you have the lower level, *Vav Kei*. The *Vav* is *Shem Havaya, Yod Kei Vav Kei*, and the *Kei*, the lower Shekhinah, is called *Shem Adnus, Alef Dalet Nun Yod*. So the *Vav Kei* combined gives you *Yod Kei Vav Kei* (26) plus *Alef Dalet Nun Yod* (65), for a total of 91. When you combine these two pairs together (47+91) it totals 138, the gematria of *chelek* or *chakal* (138). This means that in the garden there’s a purity, the peak of *kedushah*, where it’s literally spiritual perfection. And the *neshamah*, too, takes part in that perfection.

The name Yisrael

There is one more item that is very much worth stressing because it’s a remarkable observation, if we’re allowed to say that. The Arizal asks regarding “*kol yisrael*”: Why are the Jews called Bnei Yisrael? Why aren’t we called Bnei Avraham? Or what about the other Avos and Imahos? There are seven in total. Why aren’t we named after them?

The Arizal answers that the word *yisrael* (ישראל) contains every one of the seven. The *Yod* stands for Yitzchak and Yaakov. The *Shin* stands for Sarah. The *Reish* is for Rivkah and Rachel. The *Alef* is for Avraham and the *Lamed* is for Leah. So the name Bnei Yisrael encompasses all three Avos and four Imahos.

The word *yisrael* is very fitting here because the gematria of *yisrael* equals the numerical value of *Yod Kei* and *Vav Kei* when spelled out in its four variations. There are four ways we spell out the Name *Yod Kei Vav Kei*. The first is יוד הי ויו הי, which in gematria is עב, 72. The next variation is יוד הי ואו הי, which in gematria is סג, 63. The third is יוד הא ואו הא, which in gematria

is מה, 45. The final variation is יוד הה וו הה, which in gematria is בן, 52. When you add up the numerical value of the four variations,  $72+63+45+52 = 232$ . The word *yisrael* (ישראל) can be read יש רל"א, meaning "They have 231," plus one for the word equals 232. So *yesh lahem chelek*. The *chelek* is the combination of these four names and that is *yisrael*. That's why we use the name Yisrael—*kol yisrael yesh lahem chelek l'olam habo*.

The first hereafter

Now we've spoken about that first sentence, that every Jew has a part in *Olam Habo*. This means that even if a Jew commits sins, he's still assured *Olam Habo*, because no matter how much he sinned there are still two separate accounts. The first account is the payment for sins, and the second account is the reward for *mitzvos*.

When a *neshamah* comes up before the *beis din shel ma'alah*, the Heavenly court, it is first sent to clear up the account of sins. Then the *neshamah* is considered completely pure and may join the other *tzaddikim* because it has paid the price. Note very carefully, though, that we have given until now only one translation for the word *Olam Habo*, or Gan Eden. After every Jew passes away, he goes to Gan Eden. Some go through a rougher channel and others go more directly to Gan Eden, but every Jew has this portion.

In actuality, there are three hereafters. One hereafter, in the more physical sense, means that after Mashiach's coming there will be a forty-year period during which Mashiach will be the king of the Jews. He will reign supreme and there will be an era of peace and victory for the Jews. During this era, there will be no physical suffering whatsoever. During that time, there will be sheer happiness. After forty years, that era will come to an end, because during that era only those living will be present.

For example, if Mashiach—no "ifs," Mashiach will come tonight. We expect that very implicitly, with firm faith,

Mashiach will come tonight. But who will be alive during his coming and afterwards? Those who are alive in this generation will merit seeing the coming of Mashiach. Those who passed away yesterday, last year, a hundred years ago or a thousand years ago will not be present at this celebration. It will be only for those who are living at the time of Mashiach's coming. Those who are in Heaven will be able to see this coming of Mashiach from above, but they won't be able to participate in it physically. There's a difference between seeing a pleasure and experiencing it. So they will have to wait.

The second hereafter

But after the forty years, we have a hereafter known as *techiyas hameisim*. This means that even those who are in Gan Eden will rise one step higher. In Gan Eden, they have only the reward for their *neshamah*, their soul. With *techiyas hameisim*, the dead will be resurrected. They will physically come back to life. Those bodies that were buried and seem to have disappeared will come back to life in their physical form. In this physical form they will be reunited with their *neshamah*, which will come from Gan Eden. So that's the second hereafter known as *techiyas hameisim*. We have *Olam Habo*, or Gan Eden, and we have *techiyas hameisim*, which follows, when those who have passed away are reunited with their body again.

This chapter only deals with the two hereafters of Gan Eden and *techiyas hameisim*, because these two go together. All those who get Gan Eden will rise for *techiyas hameisim*. So when we say that a Jew has *Olam Habo*, we mean that his *neshamah* will go to Gan Eden and his body will rise up to be reunited with the *neshamah* at *techiyas hameisim*.

The third hereafter

The third hereafter, and the most important one, is known as the future, or the true hereafter. It's called *le'osid lovoi*, the future that is yet to come. That is, after Gan Eden and after *techiyas hameisim*, there will be a new hereafter when even

those who went through the purification process for Gan Eden and *techiyas hameisim* will have a new weeding-out process. They'll have to go on trial again to see if they deserve living in this more elegant *le'osid lovoi*, the hereafter when Hashem will be *mechadesh olomo*—He will renew all of creation.

### Rabbeinu zal's promise

Regarding this third hereafter, it pays to note something that is spine-tingling, a statement by Rabbeinu *zal*. This statement is so precious that it pays to preface our whole topic with this statement. Tosfos says that even a *tzaddik* who lived a life of purity and was *zokheh* to go to Gan Eden will have to go on trial again. And who knows if he'll merit deserving life in the ultimate hereafter, *le'osid lovoi*? That's how delicate, pure and strict the requirement is to merit the final hereafter.

Rabbeinu *zal* made a firm guarantee to anyone who will attach himself to Rabbeinu *zal*, to his words and to his advice. Meaning, he will accept the advice of *hisbodedus* and will have *emunah peshutah*, simple, pure *emunah* in Rabbeinu *zal*. (Rabbeinu *zal* is the *tzaddik emes* and was *zokheh* to a level far above practically all the *tzaddikim* that ever lived. So certainly he is the greatest authority to speak about this.) He said, "I guarantee that those who are close to the *tzaddik emes* will be assured not just of Gan Eden and *techiyas hameisim*, but also *le'osid lovoi*." That's a thrilling statement to hear. It brings a degree of *hischazkus*, strengthening of ones' hopes, to a point that is incomparable. A person who is *zokheh* to be close to a *tzaddik emes* of that caliber can look forward to all these items with assurance and knowledge that there is a definite future.

### The first exception

Now, the Mishnah goes further to say: Although we said all Jews, this is a general rule, but every rule has its exceptions. We come now to the exceptions. Practically all Jews have committed sins. Some a few, some many, and some practically



an unlimited amount, yet all of them will eventually go to Gan Eden. But there are exceptions.

There are a number of people who will never get to Gan Eden, which means that, *chas v'shalom*, they go to Gehinom permanently, *Rachmona litzlan*. These exceptions are very few. There are certain types of sins that are so serious that they're irreparable. They can't be repaired through suffering in Gehinnom. The only way to erase a sin of this kind is during a person's lifetime. While he is alive he can do *teshuvah*, he can repent for any sin he ever committed. Once a person dies, he must either pay the penalty for the sin, or if the penalty is too great, then there's unlimited penalty.

The first exception is a person who says there is no *techiyas hameisim* from the Torah. Imagine we're speaking about a person who has *emunah*. This person is observant, he has faith, and he believes in *techiyas hameisim*, which is something the atheists don't accept. But this person believes in it because the Gemara says so. Because the Rabbis of the Gemara say so, he accepts their word. This seems very good: he believes in the Rabbis of the Gemara, he has *emunas tzaddikim*. But he doesn't believe that this fact is written in the Chumash. So he accepts it as a Gemara, which is also part of the Torah.

This is a very delicate point. Yet this matter of faith is so important, that because he doesn't believe in *techiyas hameisim min haTorah*, he doesn't deserve to ever come back for *techiyas hameisim*, and therefore he loses his *Olam Habo* permanently. This is the first exception. The Gemara will discuss this at length. This is still the first Mishnah we are on. We are only introducing these items now. We're going to take every one of them in greater detail later on.

The second exception

The second exception speaks of a person who studies Torah, and even though he accepts the *mitzvos* in the Torah—i.e. he puts on *tefillin*—he doesn't believe that the Gemara

was given to Moshe Rabbeinu by Hashem. He believes, *chas v'shalom*, that the Gemara was written by the Rabbis. They made it up, *chas v'shalom*. They got it from their own minds. He believes they were very great and holy, but that they wrote the Gemara themselves. This is *kefirah*, this is atheism to the highest degree.

Our *ikur emunah*, our principal faith, is to believe that the Gemara, as well as the Chumash and Tanakh, is the word of Hashem. Hashem is the One Who wrote the Gemara. Hashem gave the Torah to Moshe Rabbeinu, meaning He taught to Moshe Rabbeinu the Chumash and the Navi and the Gemara. Not only the Gemara, but all the future parts of the Gemara, the commentaries and so on. This means that every Rabbi in the Gemara and every commentator on the Gemara received his words directly from Heaven. They all come from Hashem. This is a basic rule of faith. So even if this person would obey the laws of the Gemara, he can still lose his Gan Eden permanently because he is a *chochom*. Not a *talmid chochom*, but a *chochom*—he's one of those who are "too wise." He believes that he can be a critic of the Torah and the Rabbis of the Gemara, when in truth their words are the words of Hashem. This basic tenet of faith is that all facets of the Torah are *min hashomayim*, given directly from Heaven.

The third exception

The third exception is someone that we call an *apikorus*. *Apikorus* is a word that is used very frequently. In fact, if a person wants to insult someone, he may call him an *apikorus*. Nowadays, *apikorus* is used for one who doesn't have *emunah*, faith. A *kofer*, an atheist, is called an *apikorus*.

The Gemara has a different meaning for an *apikorus*. We'll take this up later, but basically an *apikorus* refers to one who doesn't respect a *talmid chochom*. To what extent does he break this rule in order to lose his Gan Eden? The Gemara will discuss that later on.

### Rabbi Akiva's fourth exception

Now Rabbi Akiva adds a statement. Rabbi Akiva, of course, was the rebbe of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. Rabbi Akiva was the greatest of the Rabbis in the Gemara. He's the only one who the Gemara says was comparable to Moshe Rabbeinu. Rabbi Akiva says to the *chochomim* who spoke until now: There is one more person who loses his Gan Eden permanently. There's another sin which is so serious that even if a person obeys the *mitzvos* in the Torah, by committing this one sin he loses everything.

Let's note that Rabbeinu *zal* concurs with Rabbi Akiva's statement completely. Rabbeinu *zal* says the words of Rabbi Akiva are true *l'ma'aseh*, in action. The following sin is so serious that a person receives what is called a one-way trip to Gehinnom for it. This sin is learning books of philosophy. Reading philosophy, Rabbi Akiva says, is so serious a sin that the Jew is no longer included in Klal Yisrael. He's no longer one of those who has a *chelek l'olam habo* because he has expelled himself from Klal Yisrael. Reading philosophy injects into the brain and the heart of a Jew so many germs of doubt that it destroys the basis of one's *emunah*. That person reaches a point where he begins to doubt the basic rules and foundations of our *emunah*. It's an incurable poison. One who reads books of philosophy becomes so adversely affected that he cannot be considered a Jew with *emunah*. These are the words of Rabbi Akiva. As we said, there are many tzaddikim before Rabbeinu *zal*, and at the time of Rabbeinu *zal* as well, who considered this opinion to be the final ruling.

Of course, there are others who don't. There are many great Rabbis in the past who themselves wrote books of philosophy. It's up to the wise person to select between these two viewpoints. Why study philosophy and risk transgressing the words of Rabbi Akiva? Is the gain of reading this book so much that it's worth taking the risk of losing one's Gan

Eden permanently, according to Rabbi Akiva? For those who accept Rabbi Akiva's words, or the words of Rabbeinu *zal*, it goes without saying that a Jew should avoid the study of philosophy at all costs. Just as one would never dream of drinking a potion of potent poison, so too, he would not take this poison for the *neshamah*. This is one of the major items that overshadows all other types of sins. It must be avoided at all costs. If there are courses given in philosophy, they should be avoided.

The power of teshuvah

But of course, again, regarding the items mentioned until now: As serious as they are, if a Jew broke these rules, as long as he's still alive he can do *teshuvah*, he can repent for any sin no matter how serious it is. He can have all these sins plus all others erased. There's no necessity for any Jew to go to Gehinnom. There's no necessity to suffer in the afterworld. A Jew can do complete *teshuvah* in this world and come to the future world pure, even if his sins were of this magnitude. *Teshuvah* is the key to purity, so the *neshamah* can enter into Gan Eden and merit *techiyas hameisim* without hesitation. And that kind of *teshuvah*, in fact, is possible only if a person is attached to the *tzaddik emes*, who will assist him in this *teshuvah*.

In the exact measure

The first question of the Gemara here is as follows: Why is it that if a person commits a very serious sin, like eating non-kosher food, *chas v'shalom*, which contaminates his soul, he doesn't lose his *Olam Habo*? What is so bad about someone who denies the existence of *techiyas hameisim* according to the Torah? Why is the penalty for that *kefirah* so great?

The Gemara answers: Because this is the *middah*, the characteristic, of Hashem. Hashem pays in the same measure that a person acts. The penalty always fits the crime exactly. In this case, the crime was that he didn't believe in *techiyas hameisim min haTorah*. Because he didn't believe in it, he doesn't

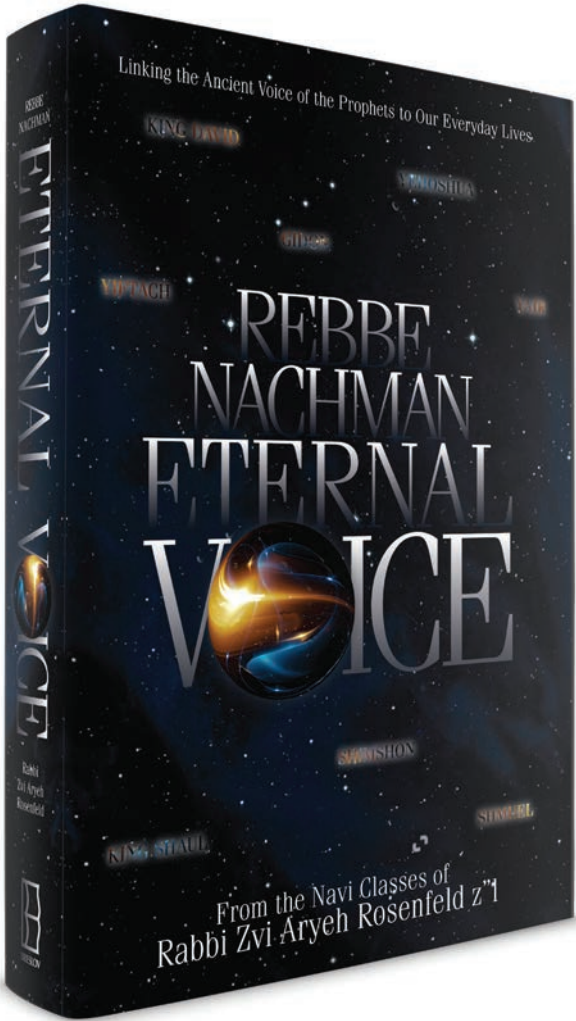
deserve it. He doesn't deserve to have *techiyas hameisim*, which means that neither his body nor his soul will merit the hereafter, not in Gan Eden and not in *techiyas hameisim*.

The Gemara asks: Where do we find that this is the *middah* of Hashem? The answer is found in a story in the *Navi*. Elisha Hanavi was called upon by the king to end a very serious famine. The king came in to see Elisha Hanavi with one of his servants. Elisha Hanavi told the king that tomorrow the famine will be over. There will be such a wealth of food that you'll be able to buy a bush-load of wheat for a small silver coin.

The king's servant, who heard this, mocked the words of Elisha Hanavi. He asked, "Will Hashem create windows in Heaven from which will come forth this wheat?" Can such a thing be possible? Because he mocked the words of Elisha Hanavi, he was given a penalty to fit his crime. Elisha Hanavi replied, "You will see this miracle, but you will not eat from that food." Later on it says regarding this servant that the people trampled him by the gate. He stood guard at the gate of Shomron and he died. We see from here, of course, that the penalty exactly fit the crime.

But the Gemara asks: Maybe the penalty was due to the curse of Elisha Hanavi? Maybe the servant died because of the tzaddik's curse and not because this is the *middah* of Hashem?

The Gemara answers that in this case, we know that it was the *middah* of Hashem because it says that the people trampled him at the gate, *hasha'ar*. Why tell us that this took place at the gate? Obviously, it's to teach us something. *Sha'ar* also means the marketplace, where prices are made. The stock price is also called the *sha'ar*. So the *pasuk* is teaching us that he was trampled because of "the price" that he mocked. The penalty fit the crime. Because he mocked the miracle, he couldn't benefit from the miracle. From here we see the *middah* of Hashem. And this is why it's very fitting that one who denies *techiyas hameisim* will not merit to participate in *techiyas hameisim* when it comes to pass, speedily in our days.



Linking the Ancient Voice of the Prophets to Our Everyday Lives

REBBE  
NACHMAN  
ETERNAL  
VOICE

From the Navi Classes of  
Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld z"l

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NACHMAN

ETERNAL VOICE

Rabbi  
Zvi Aryeh  
Rosenfeld



## **ETERNAL VOICE**

### **Linking the Ancient Voice of the Prophets to Our Everyday Lives**

From the Navi classes of  
Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Rosenfeld, z"l

Compiled and edited by  
Rabbi David Mark





### The tzaddik's final request

Unsuspectingly, this boy brought him to these pillars. He stood there and while standing there, the Philistines began their cry, a loud roar of jest and mockery. They cursed at Shimshon, laughing and joking about him. He felt with his hands for the pillars next to him, he stood in between them, and then he rested his hands on the pillars and he looked up sightless to Heaven and he prayed to Hashem.

Shimshon said, "This is my final request. I ask that I be given strength for one last time. I want to be avenged for my eye." He only said "eye," singular. "For one eye, I want to be avenged. I want to have the strength back so I can repay the Philistines for the eye. I want to save the other eye that I lost, in case I receive this blessing of strength. Now, that means the fact that I lost my eye will not be of any benefit to me, to being repaid for it. I want to save the loss of the second eye for Gan Eden, for the future world. If I have any reward for this, let my second eye be repaid for in Paradise, in Gan Eden."

Then he leaned against the posts and slowly he felt his body being permeated with the feeling of the spirit of Hashem in him. He started to press forward against these two pillars. Of course the Philistines, seeing what he was doing, roared in laughter. Here was a puny human being who had lost his strength completely, leaning against these two pillars that were hundreds of times as tall and as wide and as powerful. This was like two solid mountains, trying to upset these pillars. They watched, screamed, until he reached the peak of his strength and he pressed forward. They could see the cracks beginning to form on these pillars; for a second, there was silence, and then the loudest roar of all was when these two pillars cracked completely. The entire top of the stadium caved in on top of all

the Philistines there, and every one of the Philistines present was crushed in this rubble of rock. Buried in all this debris was Shimshon himself. Later on the Navi says that they sought him out, that his relatives came to bring him back to Israel in order to give him a hero's funeral.

How do you find a body in such rubble?

The rock itself could crush a body until probably it would not be recognized. Yet they dug up the stones and found his body. Rather than dying from the rocks, he had died from suffocation—he was not crushed at all. He was so strong physically that the rocks did not mar him at all. He was given this hero's funeral, buried in honor, knowing that he had led the Jews for twenty years to victory.

Here the Torah says one sentence, that in this last act of his destroying the stadium, more Philistines died with this one act at the time of his death than he had killed during his entire lifetime. The number of dead that he killed at the time of his death was more than he killed throughout his entire life. Which, of course, was a very nice thing to add to his credit.

Reb Noson says that the message here is a very different one. Shimshon was a tzaddik. The Torah states this for a deliberate reason: to show, as the Gemara says, that when a person is privileged to see a true tzaddik, then he should try to become very closely attached to him. If he does not attach himself to the tzaddik, he is going to have to go through a cleansing process later on.

The Gehinnom of fire and the Gehinnom of ice

Every person, no matter how young or old he is when he passes away, no matter how good or bad, has some stains that he has acquired through his sins. The *neshamah* of a person is spiritual. These stains become carved into the soul, and the only way to remove these stains of sins is through a cleansing process. This is called the fires of Gehinnom. The soul goes through this process; of course it is indescribable suffering.

The Gemara itself tells us about the suffering of Gehinnom that cannot be described in physical terms—the fires of Gehinnom. Even more, the Gemara tells us very clearly that there are two types of suffering, two types of Gehinnom. A wicked person who goes to Gehinnom goes for a period of twelve months—six months in the Gehinnom of fire and six months in the Gehinnom of ice. From fire to ice, two extremes. Of course, the question arises, why? Why would the Gemara tell us this? Isn't this something that should be told to small children? With children, you try to frighten them into behaving and tell them that if you don't behave, if you don't do right, you'll be punished, you'll suffer, you'll be given a beating. To tell this to a grown person, it would seem to repel him, *chas v'shalom*. It might frighten him, too, but it might also drive him away, it might make him reach a point of hopelessness.

Reb Noson says that the *Zohar Hakadosh* tells us there is a *pasuk*, “*Lo sira leveisa mishaleg ki chol beisa lavush shanim*,” that the righteous person is not afraid of snow or ice, because his home is filled with *shanim*. The Gemara says, “with *shnayim*,” with two, doubles, with pairs. The *Zohar Hakadosh* asks what is meant by this statement.

“Filled with pairs” means that a Jew has *mitzvos* that come in pairs. He has *tzitzis*, *tefillin*, he has two *challos* for Shabbos, a woman lights two candles on Friday night. Most *mitzvos* come in pairs, and it's these pairs of *mitzvos* that protect a person from this ice, the Gehinnom of ice. Reb Noson asks: What is the meaning of this statement, the Gehinnom of ice? What happened to the fire? Why do we speak only about the ice?

The answer is that a person commits a sin because he allows himself to be aroused, to be tempted, to be drawn. In other words, he becomes warmed up to sin with desire, and because he has allowed himself to become warm, he must pay with fire for fire—that's the Gehinnom of fire. Yet this is not the important Gehinnom, because for that sin a person is advised there are ways to cure these evil acts. If you commit a

sin, you are not doomed. Don't fear the Gehinnom of fire and don't fear punishment. All you need is one word: repentance.

Return.

As long as you're alive, Hashem says: Come back and I'll take you back. There is no limit. Even if you've broken every single law in the Torah over and over and over again, you are still accepted, as long as you want to come back.

However, there are times a person commits a much worse crime than all of these sins combined. If a person feels dejected, sad, *atzvus*, and says to himself, "This statement about repentance, about being taken back by Hashem, refers to people who are good, people who have committed a sin once in a while. But it doesn't refer to me. I'm a habitual sinner. I've done so many sins it couldn't really mean me, and therefore I'm excluded. What's the use of trying to return to Hashem when I know that I'm so evil I might do it again?"

From this line of reasoning, he becomes very cold to the thought of going back, returning. Being cold, the Gemara says, is the Gehinnom of ice. This is much worse than the Gehinnom of fire, because you can come out of the Gehinnom of fire through simple repentance. But the Gehinnom of ice, a person who is cold, that person gives up hope. Once he has given up hope, there is very little chance, opportunity, for him to return to Hashem. Because he gives up hope, he deserves the very worst. That, Reb Noson says, is "*Lo sira leveisa mishaleg.*"

A good Jew, one with faith, will never be afraid of this Gehinnom of ice. The Gehinnom of fire is no problem, simple repentance, but the Gehinnom of ice, too, he automatically will not fear, because "*Ki chol beisa lavush shanim,*" he is filled with *mitzvos* that come in pairs, doubles. That means, he tried and he failed. He repented and then went back to his evil ways, but he still did not give up hope. He came back a second time, which means he came back repeatedly, again and again. This person does not give up hope, he comes back and returns to Hashem, and that person can never worry about the Gehinnom

of ice because eventually he will succeed, eventually Hashem will take him back.

One must draw close to the tzaddik

In this case, a person who tries to come close to the tzaddik knows that the tzaddik can purify him, erase those stains due to his sins; he will not be required to have these stains erased the hard way, through the fires of Gehinnom. That's during a tzaddik's lifetime. If a person was *zokheh* to get close to this tzaddik, and then the tzaddik passes away, what does this person do then?

The answer is that if he maintains a strong faith in the tzaddik by studying the writings of the tzaddik and by continuing to believe firmly in the tzaddik, he will find that now, in turn, that tzaddik will come close to him. Those powers he had seen in the tzaddik during his lifetime, the powers where the tzaddik was able to purify him, to cleanse him, now the tzaddik's powers are multiplied manifold. As the Gemara says (*Chullin* 7b), "A tzaddik is far greater after he passes away than during his lifetime." Many times during his lifetime, a tzaddik prays to Hashem. His prayer is not answered because Hashem enjoys the prayer of a tzaddik, and Hashem says, "If I answer him, he will quit, he'll stop praying. *If I don't answer him, he'll have to come back.*"

This is the reason Yitzchak and Rivkah, our second patriarch and matriarch, prayed for a child. She was barren, she couldn't give birth. Both of them together prayed intensely every day. Their prayers were not answered after days and even years, until twenty years later, she became pregnant and gave birth. They did not give up hope in their prayers, they were persistent, but we see how long it took them.

Here, when a tzaddik passes away, his strength is multiplied many times. The prayer of a tzaddik after his passing is far more powerful than during his lifetime, and this is what the sentence hints at, the *remez* found in this sentence. That to

destroy the evil forces is the work, the duty, the mission of a tzaddik. During his lifetime, he has the power to do so, but his power is increased and multiplied manifold after his passing.

A tzaddik can destroy more evil after his passing

The *pasuk* says Shimshon Hatzaddik destroyed more evil ones at the time of his death, after his passing, than he did during his entire lifetime. A tzaddik can destroy more evil after his passing, his power is that much increased, than all he is able to accomplish during his lifetime. This is the lesson that Shimshon teaches us as far as the *hiskarvus* to *emunah* in tzaddikim.

Let's study the identity of Shimshon. This is what we have from the Navi and the Gemara. But what happened to Shimshon after his passing? We said that he had prayed for one eye to be saved so he could be assured of Gan Eden. Shimshon was a tzaddik, so what was he afraid of? If he really was a tzaddik, was he afraid he would never get to Gan Eden, that he would lose out entirely? And to what extent would he be punished for the sin of the *p'gam* of having made contact with a non-Jewish woman? The Gemara says that this is a question, which is left to the *Zohar Hakadosh* and to the Arizal to answer through what the Arizal calls eyewitness—eyewitness knowledge in Heaven.

First, Shimshon during his lifetime was a combined *gilgul* of Nadav and Avihu, the two sons of Aharon Hakohen. These two sons of Aharon Hakohen were very great tzaddikim. The Torah says they were very holy tzaddikim. However, the Chumash tells us that they brought a “strange fire,” a strange sacrifice, into the Mishkan and they were destroyed by Hashem. Fire came out of the Holy of Holies and consumed their insides, meaning their *neshamos*; their bodies were not touched. What was the reason for these two tzaddikim being killed? What was their crime? What was their sin?

The *Zohar Hakadosh* says that their sin was that they were not married. The Gemara says it was because they had drunk wine before they entered into the Holy of Holies, an act that is forbidden, as the *pasuk* says immediately afterwards. And so they had to rectify this, they had to pay for this, and therefore they came back—that is, a small part of them—as Shimshon.

Because of the fact they were not married, they paid for it now with the torture of his having to make contact with these Philistine women in this dungeon. For the fact that they had drunk wine, he had to rectify that by going through an entire lifetime without touching any wine. But this is not the point. The main question is: What happened to Shimshon afterwards?

The *Zohar Hakadosh* points out that according to the Gemara, when a person is killed, this acts as a pardon for all of his sins. If he is killed, that's enough. He has suffered and paid for his sins. Yet we find that in the case of Shimshon, his death did not pay for his sins. The fact that he had looked at a non-Jewish woman, for this he paid. The Gemara says he was punished and his eyes were cut out. This was a fitting punishment. Yet did this erase the sin completely? In addition to this, he died a horrible death, an unnatural death.

According to the Gemara in *Yoma*, dying a death like that should erase every last trace of a sin. Yet in the case of Shimshon, the *Zohar Hakadosh* says that he still had to pay for the sin, he had to come back as a *gilgul*. He came back, reborn again as King Tzidkiyahu, one of the last kings of the Jews who was captured by the king of Babylon. And, as the Navi tells us, when he was in captivity, the first thing the king of Babylon did to Tzidkiyahu was to cut his eyes out. Why so?

Since he was a *gilgul* of Shimshon, he had to go through the same penalty again and again to get this sin erased. Though he was punished when he was alive as Shimshon, and though he died an unnatural death, it was not sufficient and he had to go through this again.

The Arizal brings a series of *gilgulim* made up of the famous people in Jewish history who were sightless and were actually a *gilgul* of Shimshon. Why in his case was there so great a penalty? In addition, we find the question brought up many times in a serious way: Did Shimshon eventually get to Gan Eden? What was so bad about his crime that it could not be forgiven? The answer is that Shimshon was a tzaddik. The greater the person, the more careful, the more meticulous his conduct must be and the greater the penalty for any infraction he may have done. That's why in the case of Shimshon, so many generations had to pass before his sin could be completely eradicated.

In what appears to be Shimshon's final *gilgul*, he was one of the great rabbis of the Gemara who, as leader of all the rabbis of the Gemara, accepted upon himself blindness willingly. And that was the last, probably the last time, the final time in which he paid for this act. He was *zokheh* to become rosh yeshiva, the head of the yeshiva—not just on earth but in Heaven, too. Eventually, the story of Shimshon does have a happy ending.

The lesson for us, though, again, is that that Shimshon was a tzaddik and we should never allow ourselves to degrade his memory by any of the statements that are found in the false Bible critics. This is because Shimshon led the Jews with a willingness to sacrifice his life for them. His smallest act was greater than the great *mitzvos* of many other tzaddikim. Because he was such a great tzaddik, he had to undergo all this suffering, endure this suffering. He was eventually able to reap the benefits, the profits, of the high elevation of Gan Eden that only a tzaddik of his stature could achieve.

Never despair, no matter the situation

Now, again, the main moral here is that, as Rabbeinu *zal* said, there is no such thing as *yiush*. There's no such thing as giving up hope, whether it is an individual Jew or a group, a community or the entire Jewish people.



If the Jews see that things have turned black for them, that the world has turned against them and there seems to be no hope, they should know that if all the countries of the world, even their closest allies, have forsaken them, Hashem will never forsake them, *chas v'shalom*. Israel is compared to a sheep, a land surrounded by seventy powerful wolves that attack and keep tearing, ripping away at his lands. This has continued for ages and ages, for eons. How can it be, the Midrash asks, that a small lamb remains alive and endures these attacks of the seventy vicious, powerful wolves? Yet these wolves have continued to die, one after the other. The land continues to live on. The Midrash says the answer is, "It is due to the infinite power of the Shepherd of this land."

Hashem is our guide and He is our guard. Hashem guards over us, and just as Hashem is infinite, everlasting and eternal, so too, He has sworn that His people, we the Jews, will remain eternal, too. We have to have the strong faith with which we will be deserving of seeing our ultimate victory of glory with the coming of Moshiach, who will come definitely in our time now.

We should be *zokheh* to see with our eyes the *binyan*, the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash, *bimheirah b'yameinu amen v'amen*.



**IN HIS YOUTH**



**FAMILY WEDDINGS**



**SIMCHAS OF FAMILY AND TALMIDIM**



**SIMCHAS OF FAMILY AND TALMIDIM**





**AT KIVREI TZADDIKIM IN ERETZ YISRAEL**

