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For the Refuah Sheleima of

Yissachar Meir Ben  
Chava

# GATES OF EMUNAH

***"And Yaakov live in the land of Egypt ..."***

*(Beraishis 47:28)*

The great mountain stood out in splendor from the shadowy valley below. Its peak raised in glory and crowned with the high walls and golden towers that surrounded the royal city within. With the rising of the sun each morning its first rays would land upon the whiteness of the walls and the city above would seem to rise in flames. The farmers in the valley below would be blinded by the breathtaking sight each time they would raise their eyes to catch a glimpse of this awesome spectacle.

In the city above, life was bustling in full force with activity. Apart from the royal family, the city's residents consisted exclusively of nobles, members of the royal court, ministers and their families. The entire atmosphere was graced with a spirit of alacrity and liveliness, and an aura of determination and intensity could be tangibly felt in the air. People could be constantly seen scrambling from place to place with the expressions upon their faces making it evident they were fully aware of their value and the importance of their duties.

At the foot of the mountain in the valley below was another city. Nothing about it had any resemblance to the majestic city above. A cloud of darkness seemed to constantly hover above it and the mountains cast their shadows heavily upon its streets and the many houses that stood cramped on top of each other in seeming humiliation and shame. Its inhabitants were simple farmers and laborers who toiled from dawn to dusk, spending their days amongst the livestock and clumps of earth in the field or in the noisy factories. They never had a spare moment for anything other than work and toil. Nothing special was waiting for them on the horizon. They simply lived for nothing other than to not die.

One day a great war erupted and the king led his troops into battle against his enemies. The raging battle continued in a fury day after day, and their hope for victory began to dwindle. The king's son fell captive to the enemy and spies had managed to infiltrate themselves amongst the king's men.

Suddenly the village men grabbed their work tools and threw themselves bravely into the heat of the battle. They had no real weapons food or uniforms, yet they fought with great courage and determination. At first the enemy took no notice of them, but in the end it was specifically those downtrodden farmers and workers who led them to victory, rescued the king's son and returned the kingdom to its state of glory.

From then on, the city at the foot of the mountain became something special. Its inhabitants remained simple farmers and workmen, yet some drastic change took place there. A spirit of life began between the congested houses. The very same spirit of life and energy that once could be found only at the top of the mountain now expelled the cloud of darkness and graced the city below with its presence. The people's eyes shone with fiery enthusiasm and their hands seemed to perform their work in the way of royalty. The King came down to the people and showed them his shining countenance with warmth and love and the simple farmers experienced for the first time a taste of satisfaction and importance ... a taste of "And he lived.." *(Beraishis 47:28)*.

A simple but honest look at the world will bring anyone with even a drop of *da'as* in his head to the conclusion that there isn't really anything worth striving for in this world.

So much pain and anguish comes with every 'piece' of this world. So much suffering, emotional stress and loss. Can they really deceive us about anything in this world and tell us 'this is really worth investing our efforts in'? Does life not pass by like a fleeting shadow and take with it the result of years of toil into the past?

The only thing left to search for in this world is Hashem. Without him nothing here in this world is of any true meaning, just a heap of illusions and nonsense, false advertisements and disappointments. Yet, when we find and reveal Hashem in the world then there is no place as wondrous and true as this world, as full of liveliness and reality.

For in truth this is what the world was created for - for the man that will toil, search and seek out in every way possible to reveal more and more Hashem's Godliness and to fulfill "And you shall cleave to Him" *(Devarim 10:20)*.

As long as the focus of one's life does not revolve around this point, it cannot be truly called 'life', but rather a long process of dying. However, in order to be able to live this wonderful life and to find Hashem in everything in the world, it is necessary to break all physical desires, lowly drives and be involved in Torah and avodah with tremendous consistency.

In this way, one chooses good and true life, ascends the mountain and enters into the palace to join the king's men who are truly content and full of life.

## How to draw the life that is on the mountain down into the valley:

But what can one who was born down in the valley do? His life doesn't bring him up to the mountain top ... his feet seem to slip and stumble each time he tries to ascend ... he has been battered by the stones of trials and tribulations - he has been scarred by the hardships of life. His prayer is not comparable to the song of the king's men and his Torah doesn't contain even the slightest hint of a scent of love and fear of heaven. When he rises each morning, looks at himself and sees each day the very same negative character traits that have clung to him so strongly, the pit of despair and sadness threaten to engulf him eternally. Has the right to 'live' been denied for such a person...?

Reb Noson provides the answer for this question based on this week's parsha: "And Yaakov **lived** in the land of Mitzrayim for seventeen years." It is taught that those seventeen years were the best and most tranquil years of Yaakov's life.

This is very difficult to understand. How could it be that in Eretz Yisrael, the true and appropriate place for Yaakov, he did not have any peace and tranquility and yet in Mitzrayim, the lowliest of all places and on the threshold of the terrible *gallus* (exile), *there* he found tranquility and joy?

Reb Noson explains this according to the Rebbe's teaching (L.M 24). In truth our main task is to ascend the mountain of Hashem, to destroy evil traits, to enter into the gates of holiness and to be a part of the king's men. This was the avodah in which our holy forefathers and the Tzaddikim of all the generations involved themselves in. They were successful; they ascended the mountain and succeeded in remaining there in the place of holiness. However what should the general masses do, all those who are straggling behind and are not succeeding to climb the mountain?

However, those same Tzaddikim merited to perceive that the true desire of the king is that the bustling life at the top of the mountain should spread throughout the kingdom and that even in the city that rests at the foot of the mountain it should be possible to live such a life and to rejoice with the king.

For Hashem's will is to rectify the world. Therefore those Tzaddikim toiled to draw this joy and this holy liveliness down so that it should shine on the heart of every Jew - until each and every person, even one who has not yet overcome his evil desires and character traits - even one having done much damage and destruction, can if he truly desires, also live a good life and bring tremendous joy to himself through the keeping of the Torah and the Mitzvos.

For this is the power of the Tzaddik - Yosef - that every Jew 'anytime that he desires and tries to come close to Hashem, can be joyous and enliven himself with the great power of the Tzaddikim, through believing that each and every point of good that he merits to through each Mitzvah is

invaluable. And even the good points of the Mitzvos of the sinners of Israel, are greater than all the pleasures of emptiness and the wealth of the entire world.'

And so, through a person rejoicing in these good points, the joy carries his legs to the top of the mountain and he too merits to truly cleaving to Hashem who is the source of all life.

## Revealing the joy from within the concealment:

In light of this and in light of the Rebbe's teaching (Likutey Tinyana 23) we can understand a smattering about Bnei Yisrael's descent into the exile of Mitzrayim and about what happens to each person in his own personal exile and suffering.

In short, the Rebbe teaches that the main pleasure of Hashem is specifically when we transform the sadness and sorrow into happiness and joy. For the main rectification of the world is achieved through sifting out the joy and the good from amidst the depths of concealment. For the sin of *Adam Harishon* and the sins of all the generations caused the good in each Jew to fall captive into the forces of evil, and it is impossible to truly redeem this good except through going down and taking it out of its place of captivity.

For this reason Yaakov and his children went down to Mitzrayim and specifically *there*, he lived a life of joy and tranquility - 'For he then perceived completely that the ultimate future redemption will be specifically through *this* - by way of the Tzaddikim descending into the depths of the forces of evil which are an aspect of Mitzrayim (and all exiles are called by the name of *Mitzarayim* as is known), and sifting out the holiness from there specifically. All of this is achieved through the abovementioned aspect, for with their great power, they transform the sorrow and grief into joy.'

Yes, the purpose is to ascend the mountain, however, Hashem's true will is to send you down to the depths, into the sadness and confusion, in order that in that faraway place you should connect to the holiness of *Yosef HaTzaddik* and transform the grief and sorrow into happiness and joy.

For the main power of rectification is joy, which has the ability to lift a person up to great and awesome heights.

Now, as we prepare to welcome the holy days of *Shovavim* (the Acronym formed by the first letters of the upcoming *Parshiyot*) we should strive to ascend the mountain, to merit being amongst those who reside in the chambers of the king. However, together with this we must not forget that the main rectification is specifically at times when our desire is weakened and we have forgotten about what holiness truly is. Then, when we transform the forgetfulness into a new and fresh beginning we will truly merit to: "And he **lived**..."



# Weekly Halacha Series

By HaRav Shimon Anshin shlit" a

## Laws pertaining to *Haphrashas Challah*

### A. *Hasphrashes Challah* ("Separating" Challah) from *Kneidel Kishke*:

The following is the language of the Shulchan Aruch (*Yoreh Deah*, 329:3): "A dough mixture that is dense and one kneads it with the foreknowledge of boiling or frying it, is exempt from "separating" Challah".

The Shach on the other hand writes in *Siman 4*, that many Poskim disagree and reason that this kind of dough is also obligated in the separation of Challah. And therefore, one should be stringent in such a case to separate Challah without the Bracha (".... le'hafrish Challah")

Accordingly, one should be stringent in the case of *kneidel kishka* (made from flour) that is "cooked" in a *cholent* pot, and separate the Challah without saying the Bracha. (This excludes the case where it was made from Matzah Flour or pieces of bread that already had challah separated and therefore, there is no obligation to separate it again).

However, all of the above applies only when there is an amount of flour considered *shiur challah* (which is at least 1.050 grams) or more. Less than this amount of flour used to make dough is not obligated in the separation of Challah. (Typically this quantity of flour is used by caterers, people making a large Seuda or someone at home preparing a large amount of dough for a few Shabbasos in advance).

After the fact however, if someone did not separate Challah from the *Kneidel Kishke* before cooking the *cholent*, they should ask a Halachic authority on what to do with the food and the pot in which it was cooked.

### B. Burning the separated piece of Challah:

It is a specific Mitzvah in of itself to burn the Challah that was separated from the dough.

The Rama writes near the end of *Yorei Deah* 322, that the *minhag* is to place the separated Challah in the oven to burn it before baking the dough.

There are those today that "burn" it in the oven according to the words of the Ramah.

However, "burning" it in the types of ovens we have today is in fact incorrect because the separated piece of Challah is considered "treif" in the sense that it is forbidden for use because of its holiness.

And so as such, when it comes in contact with a hot surface, its taste becomes absorbed into that surface which then attains a taste of "treif".

What the Ramah writes about "burning in the oven", refers to the type of oven used in those

days which had open flames (similar to the ovens used today for baking Matzos) and would immediately consume the Challah and therefore no taste would be absorbed into the oven surfaces.

There are many people today that place and cover the piece for burning in aluminum foil before placing it their oven. Although this prevents the oven from becoming "treif", it does nothing in regard to the Mitzvah of burning the separated Challah.

For those who burn it over the open flame of a gas stove, much care needs to be taken to ensure that the pieces don't fall apart and come in contact with other food.

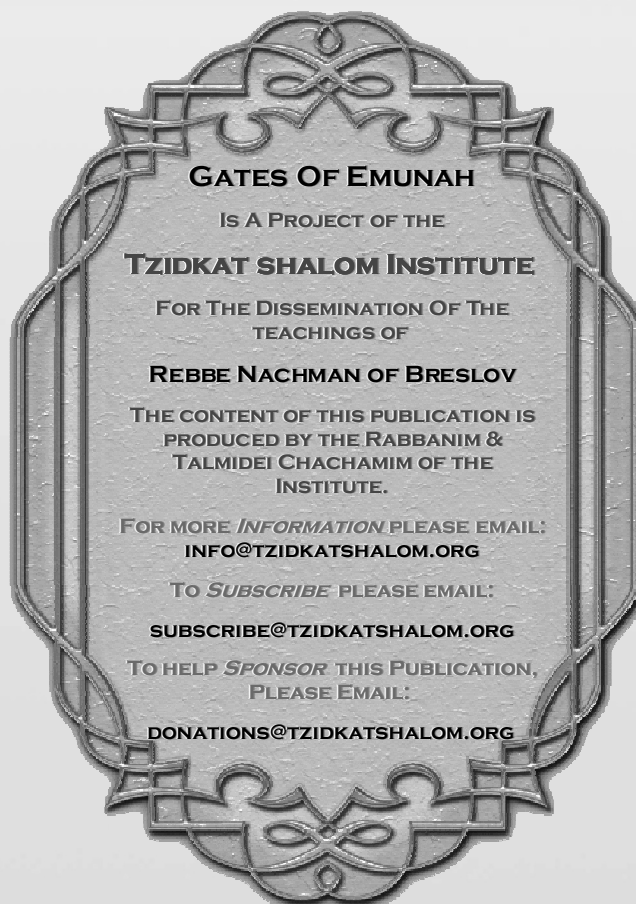
Therefore, if one does not have the mechanism in which to burn it over an open flame, the best way is to dispose of it by putting it inside 2 coverings (e.g. in 2 plastic bags or wrapped inside 2 napkins) and then placing it in the waste.

It is better to dispose of it *this* way, even though one has not performed the Mitzvah of "burning", rather than becoming involved in a question of *Issur* (that which is forbidden).

If someone has in fact been "burning" the separated piece of Challah in the incorrect way as described above, they should consult with a Halachic authority on how to re-Kasher their ovens.

### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE:

As this is a translation of the original Hebrew, if you are unclear on any of the Laws outlined herein in any way whatsoever, please consult with a Posek (Halachic Authority).



# REBBE NACHMAN'S STORIES

## The Daughter of the King

PART 23

"Truly, not to eat is very difficult, especially on the last day, when the evil inclination is very strong (meaning: the princess told the viceroy that now she will make things easier for him and he won't be forbidden to eat because it is very difficult). So see to it that you choose a place, and sit there for a year like before, and on the last day you may eat."

When one sees this incredible tale from our point of view, it is impossible not to wonder. How is it possible that the evil inclination has such stupendous authority to trip us up again and again, each time from a different angle?

How is it possible that one can work for so long at sanctifying himself, only to have the 'other side' pop up with a new test and instantly void spiritual levels that were attained in blood, sweat, and tears?

Rebbe Nachman reveals the secret here. From the minute the words "May the not good take you" were uttered by the King, the evil inclination has the authority to keep on trapping us again and again. This can be rectified only when one keeps on looking for the princess even through repeated falling. When a person is resolved to continue on his quest even after whatever he managed to attain is repeatedly taken away, this dislodges the chokehold the realm of evil has over the princess.

### "Not to eat is very hard"

We already mentioned (teaching 62) that before one comes to a degree of 'face to face'; i.e. to a state where one's faith is entrenched and clear – one must go through a 'back to back' stage. First one must go through a state where the faith is blurry and wait patiently for the salvation of Hashem.

The *avodah* during the times of constricted consciousness is fasting. This is because eating is a very exalted *avodah*. Eating properly rectifies tremendous heavenly issues. However, while the *Emunah* is incomplete, eating can bring a person down, sinking him into physicality. The *avodah* during the dark times is to confront one's temptations head-on and wrestle down the inclinations towards physicality.

This is a very hard period because while one stays away from temptations, one has no joy to enliven him. It is a dangerous time also because one may get used to fighting against his body and temptations and forget that this

regimen has a much higher purpose – to get into the fortress, find the princess, and return her to her Father. The idea is to come to such a state of consciousness where one can do anything with the proper degree of holiness and find Hashem in everything.

This is why the princess makes it easier on the viceroy and doesn't prescribe fasting. The goal isn't to ban eating but rather to be able to eat with sanctity.

### "Especially on the last day when the evil inclination is very strong."

The main difficulty is during the 'back to back' period. The main hardship is the fact the one doesn't know the might of the inclination which confronts him. He thinks that the going is so hard because he, himself, is no good. This is why he gets demoralized – and demoralization in the battlefield is the harbinger of defeat. But if one is made aware during the fight just who he is fighting against, one understands that the hardships are not due to his own unworthiness, but rather, they are a result of an objective situation – you are courageously facing a mountain, fighting a gallant fight for the honor of Hashem and the revelation of the *Shechina*!

This is how the princess consoles the viceroy for his loss – by telling him he fought a tremendous, worthy battle against a stupendous force.

### "Choose a place"

Now it is time to start again, and the beginning of new starts is to designate a place. The main obstacle to *kedusha* is when one has no place of holiness for himself. This prevents one from having any permanence in goodness. That is why the first step is choosing a place.

### "And on the last day you may eat"

You may think that because you failed, you lost everything you gained – but this isn't true. The proof is that now you may eat on the last day. This is because you already have established a toehold and you no longer require fasting and deprivations. You have already rectified your state of 'back-to-back' and you now can eat with proper sanctity. You have made headway.

