

Parashas Va'zschanan **Kindor Torah** 

*Ahavas Hashem*

“What are you doing, Avi?”  
 “I’m doing a mitzvah, Chaim.”  
 “Really? I would never know. It seems that you are not doing anything.”  
 “I’m thinking.”  
 “I see. You are thinking about a Torah *sugya* (subject), and doing the mitzvah of learning Torah.”  
 “Not exactly. I am performing the mitzvah of *Ahavas* (loving) Hashem. The source is the verse in this week’s parasha, ‘And you shall love Hashem your G-d...’ (Devarim 6:5).”  
 “That is wonderful, Avi!”  
 “It truly is, Chaim. The *Biyur Halacha* (1:1) writes that Ahavas Hashem is one of the six constant mitzvos. They can be performed at any time, and they only require thought. There is no limit to the reward for these mitzvos.”  
 “Fantastic. A person is always thinking. His mind is always going. So why not think mitzvah thoughts and get a great reward? It sounds so simple and beautiful.”  
 “It is truly beautiful. And like all mitzvos, it can be fulfilled on a simple level. However, there are many deep levels to this mitzvah.”  
 “Please, Avi, tell me more.”  
 Rav Eliezer Papo begins his classic sefer, ‘Pele Yoatz’ with the following words, ‘There is no better quality than loving the Almighty. Because from this flows all *Avodas* (service to) Hashem...There is no comparison between one who serves (Hashem) from love and one who serves Him from fear.’”  
 “In other words, Avi, this mitzvah can improve the quality of all of our mitzvos.”  
 “Right, Chaim. There are two basic types of Ahavas Hashem. The first type is loving Him out of appreciation for all that He has done for you. If someone gave you a gift, would you like him?”  
 “Yes.”  
 “If he gave you several gifts, you would like him even more. If he gave you a place to live, and provided all of your food and clothing...”  
 “I would not be able to stop thanking him.”  
 “If he saved you from drowning, and nursed you back to health...”  
 “I would owe my life to him.”  
 “The more things he did for you...”  
 “The greater my love for him would grow.”  
 “Who does more for you than the Almighty? He created you in your mother’s womb, and keeps you alive with each and every breath. He provides you with all of your food, clothing, and shelter. He saves you from danger.”  
 “How can we thank Him enough?”  
 “That is exactly what we say in the *‘nishmas’* prayer every Shabbos morning. However, these gifts are really small potatoes...”  
 “How can you say that!?”  
 “...compared to the spiritual gifts that Hashem showers us with. He chose us

from among all the nations, and entrusted us with His prized possession . . . the Torah. This gives us eternal life. This gives us *schar* (reward) beyond anything that we can imagine in this world. Each mitzvah is worth more than all of the money and pleasures of this world.”  
 “As I said before, ‘how can we thank Him enough?’”  
 “You are right. However, there is also a second type of Ahavas Hashem. The Pele Yoatz refers to it as loving Hashem’s Greatness. He is Perfect. He is the Ultimate Good. He is The Eternal and The All Powerful. How can we help but admire His Awesomeness?”  
 “Avi, how can we ever hope to fathom this?”

Chaim, the Sefer HaChinuch (mitzvah 418) instructs us how to perform this mitzvah. Each person, according to his ability, should contemplate Hashem’s commands and His deeds. Then he should take pleasure in his appreciation of the Almighty. That pleasure is his Ahavas Hashem. Do your best. You will get the mitzvah. Love the One Who chose you to learn His Torah, fulfill His mitzvos, and receive eternal life and reward from Him. Kinderlach each moment that you love Hashem, you light a little fire in your heart. Before long, your soul will be ablaze with love for Him. Then you will truly fulfill the commandment of, ‘And you shall love Hashem your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.’”

*Kinderlach . . .*  
 Every moment presents an opportunity to do a constant mitzvah. Did you eat a delicious apple today? Thank Hashem. Did you ride in a bus or car? What a quick and comfortable way to travel. It comes from Hashem. Did you see a beautiful flower? What a masterpiece of botanical engineering! Appreciate the designer and manufacturer. Did you perform a mitzvah today? You will receive eternal life and unfathomable pleasure for that mitzvah. Take pleasure in the Almighty. Who will reward you. Did you learn a word of Torah today? The reward for that mitzvah is equal to all 613 combined.

*The Best Job*

“Shalom Mr. Fried! Long time no see. You look great!”  
 “Baruch Hashem. Thank you Avi. I also feel great. I can honestly say that I have never been happier or more contented in my life.”  
 “That is fantastic, Mr. Fried. What is your formula for success?”  
 “The last time we met, I was looking for a job. I applied for a very high position. I was one of 71 applicants. The boss personally chose me for the job.”  
 “You must have felt great.”  
 “I did. It is a very respected position. Everything I do has great importance. I report directly to the boss. He appreciates my work very much, and we have devel-

oped a close relationship.”  
 “I see why you are so happy, Mr. Fried. Is the work difficult?”  
 “Yes. It is also very satisfying. It brings out my best qualities. And the pay is outstanding.”  
 “Mr. Fried, that is fantastic! Where can I get a job like that?”  
 “It is very simple, Avi. When you say ‘*Kriyas Shema*’ every morning, you accept ‘*Oi Malchus Shomayim*’ (the Yoke of Heaven). This is your job. Hashem chose the Jewish people from among the 71 nations of the world to be His agents in this world. We accepted this job at Har Sinai, and we reaffirm it every day.”  
 “Mr. Fried, how do you know that it is such a great job? Accepting a yoke sounds like a burden.”  
 “Read the words of prayer that we say after ‘*Kriyas Shema*’. They describe our job.”  
 “True and firm, certain and enduring, upright and faithful, beloved and cherished, desired and pleasant, awesome and mighty, correct and acceptable, good and beautiful is this (acceptance of ‘*Oi Malchus Shomayim*’) to us for all eternity. Mr. Fried, I am speechless.”  
 “Correct. Our job is beautiful and exalted beyond words. Now do you see why I am so happy?”  
 “I am reporting for work this minute. I want this job too.”  
 “Avi, may you be *matzliach* (successful) in your work.”  
 “Amen.”

*Kinderlach . . .*  
 We have the world’s best job. We are Hashem’s agents. He loves us, and He chose us to do His work. Besides being the most respectable position, it has great side benefits. It brings out the best in us, and the pay is better than any other job. Kinderlach, when you say ‘*Kriyas Shema*’ and the subsequent blessing, think about how great it is to be Hashem’s agent. Accept ‘*Oi Malchus Shomayim*’ with a happiness that is beyond words.

- Parasha Questions:
- What attributes do the names Hashem Elokim refer to? (Rashi 3:24)
  - What will happen to the Jewish people when they do *teshuvah*? (4:29-31)
  - What is a person’s main topic of speech? (Rashi 6:7)
  - What is the meaning of, “Do the straight and the good?” (Rashi 6:18)

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