



Parashas
Eikev

Kinder Torah



Dedicated in Loving Memory of Chaya Rochel (Karen) Portnoy o'h

Deep Happiness

"Chaim, you look so happy."
 "I am happy, deep in my heart Avi."
 "Wow! How did you achieve that, Chaim?"
 "I had a challenging mitzvah to do today. It had many details, and took a lot of time and effort."
 "How did it go?"
 "I gave it my best effort, putting all of my strength into it and finished the mitzvah. I feel so fulfilled. I really accomplished something."
 "You are living proof of the Ohr HaChaim's drasha on this week's parasha, Chaim."
 "Really? What does he say, Avi?"
 "The parasha begins with the word 'vi'hoya' (it will be). The Ohr HaChaim quotes the Medrash Vayikra Rabba (11:7), that darshens the word 'vi'hoya' to mean 'simcha' (happiness). Moshe Rabbeinu is telling us, in a very gentle way, that a person's heart is only happy when he does everything that Hashem commands him. When he puts his full effort into the Almighty's mitzvos, he is serving his Creator with all of his heart. This makes him truly happy."
 "Just knowing that fact makes me feel happy."

"There is more. We see the same word 'vi'hoya' at the beginning of the second paragraph of Kriyas Shema (Devarim 11:13). It also refers to the *simcha shel mitzvah* (happiness that comes from doing a mitzvah properly). The Torah goes on to list all of the *bracha* that Hashem showers upon a person who serves Him with simcha. On the other hand, if a person feels lacking in this area because he did his mitzvos half-heartedly, his sense of happiness is empty."
 "Does the Ohr HaChaim explain why?"
 "Yes, Chaim. He darshens the word 'eikev' to mean 'at the end'. A person is happy when he does a mitzvah correctly because he knows that at the end of his days, he will not be embarrassed or punished when he stands before the King of Kings."
 "That is wonderful, Avi. Does the Ohr HaChaim have other drashas?"
 "Yes. The special mitzvah of Torah learning must be done *b'simcha*. There is an additional simcha that comes from learning Hashem's Torah. Knowing the great reward for this mitzvah brings a person tremendous simcha. The Zohar states that Hashem's greatest pleasure (so to speak) comes when Klal Yisrael is learning His

Torah. When He is happy, the entire world rejoices."
 "Fantastic!"
 "The word 'eikev' also refers to the heel - the lowest and most humble part of the body. When a person humbles himself, he will merit understanding the Torah's hidden secrets."
 "May we all merit feeling true simcha from all of Hashem's mitzvos."
 "Amen."

*Kinderlach . . .
 We recite Kriyas Shema twice each day. The second paragraph begins with the word "vi'hoya" which refers to simcha. Which simcha? The simcha that comes from putting your full effort into Hashem's mitzvos - especially Limud HaTorah (Torah learning). Every time you say Kriyas Shema kinderlach, remind yourself of the simcha shel mitzvah. Say Kriyas Shema with great simcha! Do all of your mitzvos with great simcha!*



The Foundation

"Avi, can you come here please?"
 "Yes, Abba."
 "Avi you look like you are limping. What happened?"
 "I hurt myself, Abba. I stepped on a thorn and it went into the heel of my foot. I took it out but my heel is still sore."
 "Oy vey. *Refuah shelayma* (May you have a complete recovery). The heel is a critical part of your body. You stand upon it. If it is hurt, your whole body is affected."
 "I feel it, Abba."
 "I will tell you a Devar Torah that may make you feel better, Avi. First sit down and take the pressure off your heel."
 "Thank you, Abba."
 "The parasha begins with the words, 'Vi'hoya eikev tishmion.' 'It will be if you heed these laws, safeguard, and perform them; Hashem your G-d will safeguard you...He will love you, bless you, and

multiply you...' (Devarim 7:12-16). Moshe Rabbeinu describes the great blessings that Klal Yisrael will receive for observing the mitzvos."
 "Wonderful, Abba."
 "The word 'eikev' has a second meaning, Avi - heel. The Noam Elimelech quotes our sages (Yalkut Shemoni Tehillim remez 870). 'Just as Hashem made wisdom a crown on man's head, He made humility the bottom of his foot, as the verse states, "Fear of Hashem comes from humbly lowering oneself"' (Mishlei 22:4). Humility is the source and root of everything that is holy. It is the foundation of all Avodas Hashem (Divine Service). That is why the word 'eikev' (heel) is used when describing humility. Just as the body stands on its foundation - the heel, so too all of a person's deeds must stand on the foundation of humility."

"What a beautiful thought."
 "That is how we understand the verse, 'It will be if you heed these laws...' (Devarim 7:12). All of these laws must be clothed with humility. 'And you will safeguard them and perform them.' Performing them refers to the physical action of the mitzvah. Safeguarding them refers to the pure thoughts at the time of the mitzvah. Which thoughts? Humility. We must be thinking, 'It is a privilege to serve you, Hashem. I hope that I am worthy of it.'"
 "May we all be worthy of it."

*Kinderlach . . .
 When you have a chance, observe how a humble person conducts himself. He dresses humbly, not flashy. He walks, sits, and stands humbly, never showing his greatness. He talks humbly, not mentioning himself or his accomplishments, rather attributing everything to Hashem. He learns humbly, listening to his chavrusa (study partner). His only goal is understanding the Devar (Word of) Hashem. He respects his teachers, parents, and elders. Every one of his thoughts and actions shows deference to his Creator. As Avi and his father said, "It is a privilege to serve you, Hashem. May we all be worthy of it."*

Parasha Questions:

- How could the Bnei Yisrael overcome their fear of conquering the nations? (7:17-19)
- Why did Hashem feed the Bnei Yisrael manna? (8:3)
- What is the reason that the Bnei Yisrael inherited Eretz Yisrael? (9:4-6)
- Why was Hashem angry with Aharon? (Rashi 9:20)