



# KINDER TORAH.™

7"01

PARASHAS VOESCHANAN

## THE YOKE OF HEAVEN

**"T**hose oxen sure are working hard, Avi."

"Yes, pulling a plow is not easy, Chaim. I see something which helps them very much."

"What is that?"

"The yoke that they are wearing."

"What is a yoke, Avi?"

"It is the harness that fits over their necks like a collar."

"How does it help them?"

"It guides them, Chaim. The yoke lines them up and unites them into a team of oxen. When they are wearing that yoke, they must all pull together, in the same direction. Therefore, their strength is focused, which makes it much easier for them to pull."

"I see."

"These animals are not too smart, however. They think that their obligation to work comes from the yoke. They are naturally lazy and would rather be lying around doing nothing. Therefore, they sometimes try to throw off the yoke."

"Avi, they do not realize that the yoke is not a burden for them, rather it helps them. It is really like a parable to the first verse of Kriyas Shema – *kabalas Ole Malchus Shomayim* – the acceptance of the Yoke of Heaven."

"In what way, Chaim?"

**"T**he verse states, 'A man was born to toil' (Iyov 5:7). Work is a fact of life. Just as everyone in this world must breathe air, so too everyone must toil. The question is, what will his work be? The choice is his. He can toil for Hashem by accepting the Yoke of Heaven. That is the best occupation. He joins the 'team' of *ovdei* (servants of) Hashem. He is focused totally on productive activities that are good for him, everyone around him, the entire universe, and the Creator. He works hard serving Hashem and the Almighty rewards him richly in this world and the next."

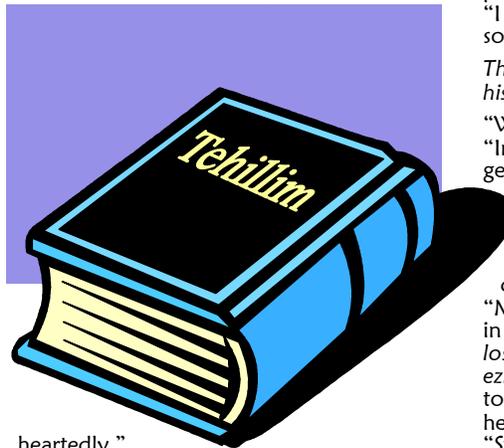
"A different person may not realize the exaltedness of this work. He will rebel and throw off the Yoke of Heaven, *chas v'shalom* (G-d forbid). He then proceeds to waste his precious time in this world pursuing worthless vanities. Even if he attains them, he will not be satisfied. Alternatively, Hashem may send him sickness, poverty, and other troubles that soak up his time, money, and energy. Either way he will end up with nothing; no deep satisfaction in this world, and no reward in the next world."

"Oy vey! What a terrible fate. I want the best work. I want to *mekabel Ole Malchus Shomayim*. How do I do it, Chaim?"

"One way is to be happy with whatever Hashem does for you, Avi, even if it is not pleasant. This does not exempt you from trying to improve the situation. However, you must accept that all the

results are from Hashem."  
 "That takes work."

**"I**t certainly does. We can think of many reasons to be unhappy with Hashem's plan for us. A rebel may imagine that the situation is worse than it truly is, and subsequently panic. On the other hand, he may worry about future problems that will probably never come to reality. His ego may tell him that he does not deserve this difficult situation. He may get frustrated because he does not have the tools to handle the situation. He may try *hishtadlus* (preparative action), and not receive the desired results. He will subsequently get frustrated and rebel. Sinas chinam, desires for honor, or material pleasures may distort the reality and make him panic and rebel. We have to rise above all of this, Avi. We must realize that Hashem is the Almighty, All Merciful King. Therefore, His decrees must be good for us. We accept them whole



heartedly."

"Do you have any other tips, Chaim?"

"Yes, Avi. Always do every mitzvah with great *zerizus* (quickness), *hislahavus* (excitement), *zehirus* (carefulness), sincerity, and *simcha*. Fulfilling mitzvos is the greatest privilege in the world! Relate to it this way. This is the type of *kabalas Ole Malchus Shomayim* that Hashem wants."

"Thank you so much Chaim. You have illuminated my whole approach to Hashem's holy mitzvos. May He help us to always work faithfully for Him."

"Amen."

*Kinderlach . . .*  
 We want to *mekabel Ole Malchus Shomayim* with all of our hearts, souls, and might, as it says in Kriyas Shema. We know that the yoke is good for us. It focuses our efforts into totally constructive work. It is good for everyone and everything. It gives us great reward, pleasure, and satisfaction. Most of all, it is the *ratzon* (will of) Hashem and gives Him *nachas ruach*. Fulfilling mitzvos is the greatest privilege in the world! Serve Hashem with *simcha*! *Mekabel Ole Malchus Shomayim*!

## CALL ME ANY TIME

**"C**an we go over the Gemora again?"

"Sure. Rava had a tremendous *kasha* (question) for Abaye."

"Right. How could two witnesses who are related . . ."

*Ring, ring.*

"What's that?"

"My cell phone. Excuse me one second."

*The man is stunned as his chavrusa (study partner) carries on a phone conversation in the middle of their learning session.*

"I'm sorry about that interruption. Now, what were we learning? I can't seem to remember."

"It's not so easy to remember when there are interruptions."

"I need to have a cell phone in order that people can reach me at any time."

"I also have something that can reach someone at any time."

*The man pulls a small brown object out of his pocket.*

"What is that? Your cell phone?"

"In a manner of speaking. I can call and get through whenever I want."

"Really? What's the number?"

"100-20-1."

"What kind of a number is that? I never heard of such a number for a cell phone."

"Maybe you recognize the number better in Hebrew. *Kuf-chof-aleph*. 'Shir LaMaalos. *Esa einai el he'harim, may ayin yovo ezri* (A song of ascents. I raise my eyes up to the mountains. From where will my help come?)"

"Stop joking around. That's no cell phone in your hand. It is a book of Tehillim."

"I'm not joking. I can speak to Hashem whenever I want. I just open up this book and begin speaking. He hears every word. Just as He heard Moshe Rabbeinu's *tefillah* (prayer) in the beginning of the parasha."

*Kinderlach . . .*  
 Hashem's line is always open. Dial Him up whenever you want. Are you feeling a little down? Call His number. Are you a little nervous about a big test? He can help you. Are you scared about the security situation? Give Him a call to remind yourself that He is protecting you. Take your Tehillim with you at all times. Call Him 24 hours a day. His line is always open.

Parasha Questions:

- What must we never remove from our hearts? (4:9-11)
- When would the Bnei Yisrael go into golus? (4:25 and Rashi)
- What will Hashem never do to us? (4:31 and Rashi)