

NEFESH SHIMSHON



DIVREI TORAH ON THE WEEKLY PARSHA AND HOLIDAYS FROM THE TEACHINGS OF RABBEINU SHIMSHON DOVID PINCUS ZT"l

THIS PUBLICATION IS DEDICATED TO THE HATZLACHAH AND ZECHUS OF נחמה ויעקב בן רחל נחמה. MAY THEY GROW TO BE TALMIDEI CHACHAMIM AND OVDEI HASHEM.

PEARLS OF WISDOM FROM THE PARSHAH

Stay in Mitzrayim?

וְחַמְשִׁים עָלוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם (יג, יח)

The Israelites ascended from the land of Egypt as a fifth. (12:12)

The word חמושים means divided into a fifth. One in five went out, and four-fifths died during the three days of darkness. (Rashi)

Only twenty percent of the Israelites went out of Egypt. The rest died shortly before *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. What was the sin of the majority, who never saw the *ge'ulah*?

Simply that they did not want to leave Egypt. They preferred to stay there. So writes the Chafetz Chaim:

“The Israelites ascended from the land of Egypt as a fifth.” One in five went out. This is because *Hashem* knew that their inclination toward Egypt and toward *olam hazeh* was stronger than their will to leave. And it was not possible to leave without the will to do so. Therefore they had to remain in Egyptian exile, so *Hashem* put them to death during the days of darkness.

We can also learn from this something else: although they saw the miracles of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, the people who did not have the will to leave did not automatically acquire it through seeing the *makos* and the great miracles. Rather, acquiring this will depends on a person's own hard work.¹

The zechus of distributing this week's publication goes to שלום ברוך יהודה בן מלכה פריידא may he have a refuah sheleimah together with all the sick among Am Yisrael

כל כתבי חפץ חיים, מאמר ציפית לישועה, הוספה 1 בענין חובת ההתחזקות בעקבתא דמשיחא

It is amazing that so many Israelites did not want to leave Egypt, where the Egyptians were throwing their children into the Nile. Why did they want to stay in such a place?

The reason is because the last year in Egypt was good. The Egyptians were undergoing the plagues and the Jews did not need to work. And physically speaking, Egypt was a great country. It says, “Like *Hashem’s* garden, like the land of Egypt.”² In the plague of blood, the Israelites sold water to the Egyptians and made a lot of money. They thought to themselves, “It’s good here. We don’t really want to leave.”

Thus eighty percent of the Israelites did not merit leaving Egypt. They did not feel a pull to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. The following joke illustrates the point, albeit a bit grossly: A *paritz*, a Polish landowner, waved his pistol threateningly and forced a local Jew to eat pork. The Jew said to him, “It’s a shame you didn’t threaten me earlier; I would have been able to

eat more...”

This is not the right way to relate to *Yiddishkeit*. A Jew by nature should gravitate to *Hashem*. Only those who felt this way, and wanted to get out of Egypt, were the ones who left and became the people of Israel.

This is how we should relate to Judaism. We should be so delighted that we have a relationship with *Hashem*. We should feel that Torah is just right for us, that the *mitzvos* are fitting to us, everything is so good. True, there are difficulties here and there, but it may be compared to drinking *schmapps*. If it doesn’t burn a little bit, it doesn’t have a good taste. We should feel that all of Torah and *mitzvos* is like *Gan Eden*, it’s so good!

The *resha'im* who don’t feel a connection to Torah and don’t sense its sweetness are the ones who ask **מה לכם העבודה הזאת** at the *Pesach Seder*. They gravitate to the non-Jews. Eighty percent of the Israelites in Egypt felt that way, and that’s why they never saw the *ge’ulah*. ●

2 Bereishis 13:10.



Get Used to Singing

אָז יִשִּׁיר מֹשֶׁה וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת (טו, א)

Then Moshe and the Israelites sang this song (15:1)

The *Shabbos* of *Parshas Beshalach* is known as *Shabbos Shirah* because we read *Shiras Hayam* in the Torah. This name highlights the importance of singing to *Hashem*.

There is more to the matter than just reading the words of the song as written in the *parshah*. This is a special time to work on the wonderful and sublime *avodah* of singing to *Hashem*.

David Hamelech would spend all night singing

to *Hashem* and praising Him. He authored the wondrous *Sefer Tehillim* in which he included through his *ruach hakodesh* all the types of songs and melodies and praises in the world.

However, we, too, need to sing these songs, as it says in the *Nishmas kol chai* prayer: **שכן חובת כל היצורים לפניך ה' אלקינו וכו' להודות להלל לשבח לפאר לרומם להדר לברך לעלה ולקלס, על כל דברי שירות ותשבחות דוד בן ישי**. It says that every person

needs to sing his song to *Hashem* for the great and wonderful acts of kindness that he receives every day and every moment.

We imagine to ourselves that if we were among those who left Egypt after hundreds of years of terrible, crushing exile, and *Hashem* redeemed us through such amazing and open miracles, and in the end, Pharaoh chased after us furiously in order to kill us and our children, and at the last moment, the terrible sea that blocked our escape split open and turned to dry land – if we would be among those who passed safely through the sea, we surely would sing to *Hashem* with tremendous excitement! There is no question about it.

Now let us look at a well-known teaching of *Chazal*:

A person's sustenance is as difficult as the splitting of the Sea, as it says, "He gives bread to all flesh,"¹ and immediately after that it says, "He cuts the Sea into pieces."^{2,3}

In other words, you come home and look in the fridge, and you see all sorts of good food products in there. Nowadays we have food and we have clothing. Not only for us, but also for the whole family. This is a veritable *Kri'as Yam Suf!* We should be so excited that we start singing.

Chazal say further:

Said R. Elazar ben Azariah: The excretion of waste from a person's body is as hard as the splitting of the Sea.⁴

A person relieves himself. He thinks about the amazing functions of the human body, he feels how *Hashem* is the Healer of all flesh and does wonders, how He keeps him healthy in great

kindness and compassion. He just went through a "splitting of the Sea"! He should recite the *Asher yatzar* blessing with excitement and profound thanks.

We need to get used to this wonderful *avodah* of song. We need to open our eyes and our hearts, and join in with the world's song of thanks and praise to its Creator. If we do so, the following teaching of *Chazal* applies to us:

Said R. Yehoshua ben Levi: Anyone who sings to *Hashem* in this world will merit singing it in the next world, as it says, "Fortunate are those who dwell in Your House; they will yet praise You forever."^{5,6}

And *Chazal* said the following on our *parshah*:

Said R. Meir: What is the source in the Torah for *Techiyas Hameisim*? It says, "Then Moshe and the Israelites will sing this song to *Hashem*." It does not say they sang, but rather that they "will sing." This is a source in the Torah for the Resurrection of the Dead.⁷

In other words, whoever sang *Shiras Hayam* now will merit singing it when the *Ge'ulah Sheleimah* comes.

Early Torah sources write that when we recite *Shiras Hayam* in the morning in *Pesukei d'Zimra* we should say it word for word, pleasantly and meaningfully and with great *kavanah*, as if we ourselves passed through the Sea and *Hashem* saved us, like He saved the Israelites when they passed through the Sea. This is a very great thing for the soul, and it atones for all of one's sins, and he who does so will merit singing this song when the *Ge'ulah Sheleimah* comes, may it be soon. ●

1 *Tehillim* ch. 136.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Pesachim* 118a.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Tehillim* 84:5.

6 *Sanhedrin* 91a.

7 *Ibid* 91b.

כָּל הַמַּחֲלָה אֲשֶׁר שָׂמַתִּי בְּמִצְרַיִם לֹא אֲשִׁים עָלֶיךָ כִּי אֲנִי ה' רִפְאֵךְ: (טו, כו)

All the sicknesses that I placed on Egypt, I will not place on you, because I, Hashem, am your Healer. (15:1)

Preventative Medicine

Many people think this *pasuk* contradicts itself. First it says that we will not become sick. Then it says that *Hashem* is our Healer. If we aren't sick, why do we need healing?

The answer is a good healer, a good doctor, instructs people in healthy living habits so they won't fall ill and need to be healed.

Usually, people go to the doctor when they are already sick, and then the doctor typically prescribes medicine rather than teaching the patient what he can do to avoid illness in the first place.

However, there are people nowadays who are not so happy with antibiotic treatment. They prefer natural healing to conventional medicine. This has brought many people back to various methods that strengthen one's health and prevent sickness. They remind us that the only way to stay healthy is to eat right. If a person eats without discrimination, and ruins his health, a doctor might not be able to help him.

When it comes to physical health, we all understand that we need to watch what we eat because we could damage our health in ways that can't be remedied by just taking a pill or a shot. We need to live a healthy lifestyle in the first place, so we won't end up in the doctor's office.

The same is true with spiritual health. Most of us know people that need our prayers. We *daven* for them and wish them a *refu'ah sheleimah*. The question is what can be done about it? How can we diminish the number of sick people?

Some suggest to designate a *Yom Tefilah*, a day devoted to prayer. This is a wonderful idea, but it somewhat resembles going for a serious operation. It is a means to be reserved for cases of emergency. We

can't live routine life that way, just like we can't take antibiotics all the time. We should rather search for a spiritual lifestyle that will keep us in good health so we won't need days of *tefilah* and so forth.

The Segulah of Mitzvos

Everyone understands that a *mitzvah* brings health, happiness and satisfaction, and an *aveirah* brings tragedy, sickness and pain. However, each *mitzvah* has a special quality, a special *segulah*, that helps in a certain area.

For instance, *mezuzah* has the quality of protecting the home from thieves. *Chazal* say that *Hashem* stands at our doorway to protect us, so to speak. The Divine Name *Shadda-i* written on the *mezuzah* parchment stands for *שומר דלתות ישראל*, "He guards the doors of Yisrael." Thus, someone who is smart will check his *mezuzos* from time to time, rather than investing in locks and bolts.

So it is with other *mitzvos*. They have special qualities that help in specific areas. Whatever the situation, we should search for the part of Torah and *mitzvos* that is especially pertinent to it.

In this spirit, we need to think about what we can do in our regular daily lives that will protect our health. What spiritual "vitamin," what aspect of Torah and *mitzvos*, did *Hashem* offer us to keep us healthy?

We indeed have the blessing of *Refa'einu* in the *Amidah* prayer. However, this is a prayer for people who are already sick. It is more comparable to antibiotics. We are looking for a spiritual form of preventative medicine.

In my opinion, the special blessing for preventing illness is *Asher yatzar*. It ends with the words *רופא כל בשר*

ומפליא לעשות – “He is the Healer of all flesh and works wonders.” It doesn’t say that *Hashem* “heals the sick,” but rather that He is the Healer of all people. It begins ברוך אתה ה' – You, *Hashem*, are a בריכה, a “pool,” a fountain of healing power. This blessing does not mention sickness. On the contrary, it praises *Hashem* for protecting our health: אם יפתח אחד מהם או יסתם אחד מהם.

It seems to me that people still try to recite the *Refá'einu* blessing in the *Amidah* with *kavanah*, but the blessing of *Asher yatzar* is not recited the way it should be, and sometimes people don't even say it at all. The proof is how many sick people there are. If we would recite this blessing properly, there would not be so many illnesses.

The Healing Relationship

Chazal say about the blessing of *Refá'einu*:

But why was healing placed as the eighth blessing in the *Amidah*? Said R. Acha: Because *milah* is set to be performed on the eighth day, and *milah* needs healing. Therefore, the blessing of healing was placed eighth.¹

Why was the blessing of *Refá'einu* associated with *milah*? There are plenty of other illnesses and injuries that need healing. The illness caused by *Milah* pales in comparison to that of many other maladies.

The point that *Chazal* are making is that *Hashem's* healing is a *bris*, a covenant, a relationship with Him.

If we would ask someone how he sees, he would likely answer, “With my eyes.” Asked how he hears, he would say, “With my ears.” How does he walk? “With my legs.”

I will tell you a story about how I discovered that we don't walk with our legs.

Once I was in a traffic accident and my legs were injured. I was sitting in the wrecked car until someone came and said to me, “Get out of the car!” I responded, “I can't.” He showed me: “Look, you can get out like this.” I thought to myself: Right, if your legs are healthy, that's how you get out.

We don't walk with legs, we don't see with eyes and

we don't hear with ears. Walking, seeing and hearing (and other bodily actions) do not come naturally because that's how the world works. They all are a personal gift from *Hashem*. Because we are so used to them, we don't notice this, and only when the eyes stop seeing and then *Hashem* gives eyesight back, then a person starts to understand that we don't see with our eyes. We need *Hashem* to empower our eyesight.

There is one time when we are together with *Hashem* in a way reminiscent of being in *Beis Hamikdash*. This is when we are sick. *Chazal* say:

The *Shechinah* is above the pillow of a sick person.²

Normally, only the *tzibbur* may recite prayers that are in Aramaic. An individual needs to pray in Hebrew. The *tzibbur* is different because the *Shechinah* is there. However, a sick person may *daven* in Aramaic because the *Shechinah* is with him.³ When a person is sick he is in a covenantal relationship with *Hashem*.

The fact that the blessing of *Refá'einu* was fixed as the eighth blessing of the *Amidah* implies that healing is a miracle. This is because the number eight is associated with matters that are above nature. Every time a person is healed, it is a miracle.

The question is whether a person needs to be sick in order to attain this wondrous closeness to *Hashem*?

The answer is, of course, no. We can attain the same closeness by praying to *Hashem* before sickness comes.

We learn this from Rachel and Leah. They both were barren. Rachel cried and received dear children, and Leah cried and received dear children. Leah merited the same miracle that happened to Rachel, but with a big difference: Leah cried for years before she got married, and had children right after marriage. (We wouldn't even know that Leah was barren if not for the Torah revealing this to us, as mentioned in Rashi.) Rachel didn't cry before marriage, and afterward she needed to cry for years until she had children. This illustrates *Chazal's* teaching:

A person should always beg *Hashem* for mercy before he falls sick, because if he falls sick, he is asked

1 *Megilah* 17b.

2 *Shabbos* 12b.

3 See *Ibid.*

The Building of Tefilah: Part Two

Building a New World

Every morning we build the world anew. “*New in the morning; Your faith is great.*”¹ This world has two parts: the outer part and the inner part. The inner part divides further into outer and inner: a Jew’s state when he enters *Hashem’s* house, and a Jew’s state when he stands before *Hashem*. These two parts are called *Heichal* and *Kodesh Kodoshim*. Corresponding to them we recite the *Shema* and its blessings, and the *Amidah*. The *Shema* and its blessings relate to *Hashem’s* unity, and the *Amidah* is standing before the King.

Tefilah centers around the *Amidah*. The *Amidah* makes *Tefilah* what it is. The primary *halachos* of *Tefilah* relate to the *Amidah*. Everything we recite beforehand is introductory; it is the “ladder” leading up to the *Amidah*. And what we recite afterward is the rungs of the “ladder” by which we descend from the *Amidah*.

The *Amidah* is standing before *Hashem*. After all the introductory stages we come to the level where the awareness of “*There is nothing else besides Him*” encompasses all human needs. We need healing, we need *parnassah*, and so forth. It is all in *Hashem’s* hands. We are in His hands. With such an awareness it is possible to actually stand before *Hashem*. This is the *Amidah*. It is the *Kodesh Kodoshim* of *Tefilah*.

In the *Shema* and its blessings we attain awareness of *Hashem’s* unity. We understand that *Hashem* is One. This is the *Heichal*, *Hashem’s* house. But before we come to these lofty stages we need to build our world. We need to build its external parts. In this world, not every day is *Shabbos*, on which we are virtually in *Hashem’s*

house and standing before the King. In the *Kodesh Kodoshim*, only the *Kohen Gadol* may enter. And a *kohen* who enters the *Heichal* for purposes other than performing the *avodah* has committed a sin liable for lashes. The *heichal* is not living quarters. We enter *Hashem’s* house with fear and trepidation. Unless we are coming in to perform *avodah*, we are not even allowed to be there.

The world in which we live the ordinary aspects of our life, the world of natural law, is the external part of the world. This natural, ordinary life also divides into an inner aspect and an outer aspect. The inner aspect is called *Azarah* and the outer is called *Har Habayis*.

To illustrate these concepts, let’s say a person picks up a slice of bread in order to eat it. There are two aspects to this act:

He is eating a slice of bread. It is *Hashem’s* Will that he has bread to eat, and he is eating it.

This slice of bread brings him to recite the blessing of *Hamotzi*. The blessing is the inner aspect of the external act of eating bread, and the bread itself is the outer aspect.

When it comes to the order of *Tefilah*, the outer aspect of the outer part is *Birkos Hashachar*. This is the part of *Tefilah* that builds the outer, natural aspect of life on its simplest level. However, the outer, natural part of life has an inner aspect, and this is what *Pesukei d’Zimra* are about.

Birkos Hashachar and *Korbanos* correspond to the external part of life, to *Olam Ha’asiyah*. This is the natural, physical world in which we bless *Hashem* for all of nature. We thank Him for our eyes, we thank Him for our clothes, we thank Him that we have solid ground to stand on so we don’t freefall in space. And so forth. This corresponds to the most external part of *Beis Hamikdash*,

1 Eichah 3:23.

which is *Har Habayis*. This external area is fitting to be used as living quarters.

Our *avodah* in this area is to live a life of Torah. This is the outer aspect of the outer part of *kedushah*, the aspect that people tend to treat lightly and fail to recognize its importance. Only when something starts to hurt, then they start to appreciate what they have, and to thank *Hashem* for it.

Pesukei d'Zimra corresponds to the *Azarah* area of *Beis Hamikdash*. The *Azarah*, the Temple Courtyard, is where the *avodah* was performed. This is where the *Mizbeach* stood. But it is still not the inner part of *kedushah*, although it is more internal than *Har Habayis*. The *Azarah* expresses the awareness that all of one's life should be dedicated to *avodas Hashem*.

In *Pesukei d'Zimra* we sing the song of the whole natural world in which we live our physical lives. Eating, drinking, family, health, and so on. These things are very important for us. As the

Rambam writes,² a sick person cannot learn Torah properly. In this song we express the simple truth that everything is from *Hashem* and everything is for *Hashem*. This illuminates the whole world with the light of truth.

Hashem created the world in such a way that we want and need health, *parnassah*, satisfaction, happiness, and other things. Why do we want these things? Because *Hashem* wishes us to have them.

Even after we go through *Birkos Hashachar* and *Pesukei d'Zimra*, that is, *Har Habayis* and the *Azarah*, before we meet the King Himself there is a place called the King's house. This is the *Heichal*.

The King's house is something else altogether. It is the awareness of *Hashem's* absolute control, of His Oneness. *Hashem* does everything and runs everything. But this is not yet the *Amidah*. In the *Amidah* we come to a higher awareness: not only does He do everything, but since He brings everything into being, everything is Him. ●

2 *Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Dei'os 4:1.*

STORIES FROM THE LIFE OF RAV SHIMSHON PINCUS ZT"l



Only Him

A couple from Ofakim was devastated when their son was rejected by the school of their choice. The couple begged Rav Shimshon to intercede on their behalf, and he immediately took pen to paper and wrote a strongly worded letter to the administration.

With the coveted letter in hand, the mother revisited the school, certain that the letter would

work its magic, but to her vexation, the principal refused to even open it.

"We're full. We don't have one extra slot!" he declared unequivocally, leaving her no room to argue.

Chagrined, she returned to Rav Shimshon and repeated the principal's reply. Uncharacteristically, Rav Shimshon lifted his hands in despair, expressing that he'd already done everything in his power.

However, as she turned to leave, he presaged, “But don’t stop *davening* for a miracle that will allow you to educate your children as you desire.”

The reaction was completely unexpected. *Chinuch* was one of Rav Shimshon’s chief priorities, and he had been known, many a time, to go to extreme lengths to ensure that a child would be accepted in a proper Torah institution. The mother had been certain that the Rav would fight on her behalf, as well, and she was both deeply shocked and distressed when he seemed to so easily dispense with her heartbroken plea.

Blinded by tears, the woman whispered her half-hearted thanks before leaving the Rav’s house. Only then, did she allow the tears to fall freely, beseeching *Hashem* to answer her prayers. Barely had she turned the corner when Rav Shimshon was seen hurrying outside and proceeding straight to the school that had rejected the woman’s son. Receiving an immediate audience with the principal, he spoke compellingly and persuasively until the principal finally agreed to accept the boy — who today is a distinguished *avreich* and *talmid chacham!*

Naturally, the parents were overjoyed to receive the news of their son’s acceptance, but the deeper lesson was absorbed only later when someone inadvertently revealed the identity of their benefactor. When asked to explain his unusual behavior, Rav Shimshon confessed that he’d reacted with uncharacteristic indifference to ensure that she, the mother, would turn to *Hashem* from the depths of her heart, with the unequivocal knowledge that she had no one upon whom to rely except Him! Only once this *tefilah* was tucked safely into his arsenal, a *tefilah* so potent and compelling that Rav Shimshon had no doubt it would be accepted, did he hurry to the school and appeal on the family’s behalf.

In the Heart of the Desert

Rav Shimshon built upon this foundation of

tefilah throughout his life, both in his own *tefillos*, which were charged with emotion, passion, and yearning, and in the lessons that he imparted to others on the exalted power of *tefilah*.

Rav Shimshon had a special place in his heart for Jewish couples who were not yet blessed with children. He carried their pain and burden deep inside, and a substantial portion of his *tefillos* on Rosh Hashanah was on their behalf.

One evening, knocks sounded on the Pincuses’ door. On the doorstep was an *avreich* from Ofakim who had been childless for many years. The couple had visited world-acclaimed fertility doctors and specialists, who dashed their hopes time and again. Now, upon returning from yet another failed treatment, the husband sought solace and spiritual strength from the Rav.

A tear rolled down his cheek as he mumbled miserably, “I don’t even know what to tell my wife when I come home tonight. She’ll be devastated.”

“*Tzum Ribbono shel Olam hustu shoin geshrigen*, did you cry out to Hashem yet?” Rav Shimshon asked.

“Of course!” replied the man, astonished by the question. “I *daven* all the time!”

The Rav wasn’t satisfied. “But do you call out loudly, forcefully? Did you ever scream? Did you ever turn to him from the depths of your heart. *Hustu geshrigen?!?*” Without awaiting his reply, Rav Shimshon suddenly announced, “Go home now, and come back after midnight.”

After midnight?! the man wondered, perplexed. Why the middle of the night? Yet if the Rav had asked, he wouldn’t object. After midnight, when all was quiet in the sleepy town of Ofakim, the man strode quickly to the Rav’s house and knocked lightly on the front door.

It swung open immediately, indicating that Rav Shimshon had been eagerly anticipating his arrival. “Come! Let’s go!” he announced, gesturing to his car.

The engine spluttered to life, and the car

wended its way through the dark town toward the exit. Before long, the scenery changed from quaint apartment buildings to vast, barren desert. The world was pitch black, and only the monotonous sound of chirping interrupted the stillness. After ten minutes of driving seemingly nowhere, Rav Shimshon pulled to a stop on the side of the road and exited his car followed by his curious passenger.

“You see Ofakim from here?” Rav Shimshon asked.

“Those faint orange lights?”

“You think they can hear you from here?”

“From here?! Of course not!”

“Good. So now I want you to cry to *Hashem*. But shout, really scream! I’ll show you how.”

Taking a deep breath, he let out a soul-shattering bellow, “*TATTY! TATTY!*” The only reply was his voice echoing across the desert sand dunes. “*Tatty... Tatty...*”

Turning to the startled man, he asked, “You think anyone hears me except for you?”

“Uh... I guess not.”

“Good. Because now it’s your turn. Shout the same way,” he urged him. “Cry to Him, talk to Him. Unburden your heart. HE HEARS YOU! And He’s the Only One Who can truly help you. I’ll be back in a half-hour.” With that, Rav Shimshon entered his car and drove off into the darkness, abandoning the man in the desert wasteland.

Alone with the *Ribbono shel Olam*.

“The taillights soon disappeared around a bend, and I remained completely alone in the huge desert,”

describes the man. “I cried, shouted, and screamed like I’d never done in my life. My heart opened completely, and I discovered true *kirvas Elokim*. Tears flowed down my cheeks, and I heard my own voice echoing again and again in the wilderness. In my mind’s eye, I could picture it filling the world from one end to the other.”

“Some time later, Rav Shimshon returned, peered penetratingly into my tear-stained face and asked, “How was it? *Du hust aroisgeshrigen?* Did you scream? I don’t think so. I’m going back, and now I want you to scream to *Hashem* — but with strength! From the depths of your heart, and He’ll answer you!”

The scene repeated itself again when Rav Shimshon returned. Only after he’d driven back and forth and gazed compassionately into the man’s eyes for the third time did he nod in satisfaction and gesture for him to rejoin him in the car. The ride back to Ofakim passed in utter silence, interrupted only when Rav Shimshon pulled up in front of the man’s house and said in parting, “*Besuros tovos*, and good night.”

A year didn’t pass before the couple’s despair turned to joy, and his wife gave birth to twins.

“It was a *moifes!* How did you do it?” Rav Shimshon was asked many a time after the story became known. Rav Shimshon, however, didn’t perceive it as anything out of the ordinary.

“What *moifes?* The man spoke and shouted to the *Ribbono shel Olam* with such a sense of closeness that it was impossible for *Hashem* to not to hear his *tefilah*.” ●



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