



## Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Bechukosai 5782

### 1 – Topic – A Machshava for Shvauos

As we prepare simultaneously for Shabbos Parshas Bechukosai and for the Chag Hashvauos which is almost upon us. Let me start with a Machshava for Shvauos. In the Kol Rom (Moadim, Mamarei Shevuos, Maimar Daled, Page Mem Hei) Rav Moshe asks a Kasha. He asks why is it that Mattan Torah was in Chutz L'aretz? Mattan Torah was on Har Sinai which is not part of Eretz Yisrael. We know that HKB"Y is Mashreh Shechinaso primarily in Eretz Yisrael. As a matter of fact, once Klal Yisrael entered Eretz Yisrael no one could become a Navi unless he started in Eretz Yisrael. Here there was Nevua for 600,000 people that was Chal Davka in Chutz L'aretz. Halo Davar Hu! Why is Mattan Torah in Chutz L'aretz?

Not only that, but we find two other M'ain of Kabbalas Hatorah. We find Mishna Torah where Moshe Rabbeinu gets together with Klal Yisrael and reviews the Torah, and then we find Kimu V'kiblu the new Kabbalas Hatorah and all of this is Davka in Chutz L'aretz. Halo Davar Hu! Everything with Kabbalas Hatorah in Chutz L'aretz. It needs an explanation.

Rav Moshe brings from the Mechilta who asks why was it in Chutz L'aretz? (שלא ליתן פתחון פה) (לאומות העולם לומר לפי שנתנה בארצו לפיכך לא קבלנו since Mattan Torah was in Eretz Yisrael we weren't Mekabeil.

Rav Moshe says that it is very difficult to say that that reason is enough of a reason. Because Shelo Yomru Goyim, therefore, Klal Yisrael should have a loss that they shouldn't be in Eretz Yisrael. It must be that there is some depth, some Omeik to what this Medrash is saying.

Rav Moshe answers with a very Yesodosdika idea, a very important theme. Rav Moshe says we know that Eretz Yisrael is Gevoah Mikol Ho'aratzos, it is Kadosh Mikol Ho'aratzos. Eretz Yisrael is the primary spot on this world, a place that is K'negged facing the opening, sort of the portal from Olam Hazeh to the spiritual world. Anywhere else in the world is not Eretz Yisrael. HKB"Y is telling us that through Koach HaTorah a person could make any place in the world have the Maila, the benefit of Eretz Yisrael. One of the nations of the world would say we are not Mekabeil the Torah, that doesn't mean we are not Mekabeil the Torah because it was given in Eretz Yisrael. It means to say that we can't be Mekabeil the Torah because we don't live in Eretz Yisrael. The Torah is for Eretz Yisrael.

The answer is no. The Torah is for everyone, however, in a place that is the primary suitable place for the resting of the Shechina, that is Eretz Yisrael. But anywhere in Chutz L'aretz where you sit

and learn, sitting and learning raises that place to have the benefit of Eretz Yisrael, a place where the Shechina is Sheruya.

We know that Rav Yochanan said (Ed. Note: Berachos 8a (Similar theme in Megillah 29a)) (למען (יָרְבוּ יְמֵיכֶם וְיָמֵי בְנֵיכֶם עַל הָאָדָמָה). Arichas Yamim is Eretz Yisrael. He said in Bavel the places where people sit and learn that is also Eretz Yisrael.

With this Rav Moshe explains a puzzling Rashi (מורא לעובדי כוכבים) and Tosafos (הר שיצאה ממנו) (הוראה לישראל) in Taanis 16a where they refer to Har Hamoriah and Har Sinai somehow as the same place. (המוריה זה סיני) Tosafos says. It is funny, it is strange as Har Hamoriah is the Makom of the Akeida and Har Sinai is the Makom of Kabbalas Hatorah. But it has a dimension of sameness and that is that Har Sinai when the Torah is given, has the same Koach of Hashro'as Hashechina and that is the way it has been for generations. Wherever we sit and learn it raises the place to a Maila of Har Sinai.

With this Vort perhaps we can understand the Minhag of thousands of years that Klal Yisrael learns all night Shavuos. The Minhag goes back at least 2,000 years that Yidden have learned all night Shavuos by night. It adds a dimension to Shacharis. Normally Shacharis in Chutz L'aretz is a regular Shacharis in Chutz L'aretz. When you sit and learn before Shacharis you are Maila this place in Chutz L'aretz to have that Maila of Eretz Yisrael just like Har Sinai. Then the Shacharis which is the Makom of the place that you were learned all night, that becomes raised to a Shacharis in Eretz Yisrael or the equivalent in Eretz Yisrael, a Shacharis on Har Sinai.

This Minhag that goes back a very long time definitely many centuries, is a Minhag that today people are lazy to keep. We live in a weak generation. The Chofetz Chaim said our generation is too weak to be Gozeir Taanis, to have fast days. When I read that I understand and I am Mekabeil that we don't fast Stam Azoi to do Teshuva. What does it mean that we are weak, we are physically much stronger than other generations. We are well fed.

The answer is that emotionally we are not so strong. It is hard for us to fast, it is hard for us to stay up all night. Everything is hard, everything is difficult. Half the Chosson and Kallahs ask if on the day of their Chasunah they have to fast. It used to be that a Chosson and Kallah were eager to fast on their Chasunah day because it is a day that has an extra special meaning.

We have to be Mechazeik ourselves and find the strength and the Koach to do the things that we have to do and not to be lazy. Shavuos by night is a night when of all nights of the year to give ourselves this very special Chizuk.

## **2 – Topic – A Thought on the end of the Parsha**

I would like to talk about the end of the Parsha. The last Posuk 27:34 (אָלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת) which Chazal Darshun that (שׂאִין נְבִיא רִשְׁאֵי לַחֲדָשׁ דְּבַר מַעֲתָה). That after Moshe Rabbeinu no Navi has a right to be Mechadeish new Mitzvos. Whatever Yehoshua did needs explanation but that is the Gizairas Hakasuv. (אָלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת שׂאִין נְבִיא רִשְׁאֵי לַחֲדָשׁ דְּבַר מַעֲתָה). It is fascinating that the last Posuk in Vayikra and the last Posuk in Bamidbar 36:13 is (אָלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת) and Chazal Darshun and this seems to be a

Tumul by the Achronim as to whether they are Darshuning the Posuk in Vayikra or the Posuk in Bamidbar.

I once asked Rav Moshe Shapiro Zatzal (אֵלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת) is the Posuk in Vayikra or the Posuk in Bamidbar? If I recall correctly he said Muz Zain the last Posuk in Vayikra and not the last Posuk in Bamidbar. Why Muz Zain, I am not sure. Maybe because at the end of Bamidbar it would be a normal Posuk and we wouldn't have to Darshun it at the end of the Torah. At the end of Vayikra it is a Drasha. I am not sure why. But at any rate, (אֵלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת שאין נביא רשאי לחדש דבר מעתה) and that is how Bechukosai ends.

Then we say Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik. Again Klal Yisrael is doing this for hundreds of years. Your father did, your Zeide did it and his father and Zeide before him. They all said Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik. It has become something of a nursery rhyme Rachmana Litzlon. The children have rhymes for it. It has somehow become meaningless. How you say it is fine, it doesn't mean anything. No!

There is a reason why we say Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik. Because when we finish one of the Seforim of the Torah we have to be Mechazeik ourselves. We have to stop and pause and say look we are traveling from Simchas Torah to Rosh Hashana, Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik. We did another milestone. This is the third Sefer that is finished. Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik. So when you say it in Shul, say it with meaning, say it with feeling, say it with thought. Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik.

Have in mind Chazak, let us be strong. We should have the Koach to stay up all night on Shavuos, stay up late learning. To do what we need to do in our Avodas Hashem. Not to be soft people who we unfortunately are with Yeridas Hadoros. It is a fact that it is more difficult. It is not Rishus, it is a fact. Still we can do better. So everybody Chazak Chazak V'nischazeik. Be strong and strengthen everybody around you and we will all become stronger in our Avodas Hashem as we march B'ezras Hashem towards Kabbalas Hatorah Kulanu Yachad. A Gutten Shabbos to one and all!

### **Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Bechukosai 5776**

1. We are getting much closer to Mattan Torah. Today is already 40 days in the Omer. I would like to share with you a thought regarding Nesias Kapayim (Duchaning), something we will do shortly on the Chag Hashevuos and something that has an indirect connection to the Parsha. There is a fundamental question. When Kohanim give a Beracha Yevarechacha Hashem V'yishmerecha we have a Kabbalah that that Beracha has a Tokeif, it has a power to bring Beracha and Shemira to Klal Yisrael. Is that Beracha dependent on Zechusim or is it independent of Zechusim? What I mean to say, is Duchaning a free pass that even if you don't deserve it you get a Beracha because of the Duchaning or is it something which allows your Zechusim to bring Beracha and helps it along?

There is a Rokeach in Parshas Bechukosai that is quoted by Rav Druk in his Sefer Darash Mordechai on the Parsha (page # 257). The Rokeach says that at the beginning of this week's

Parsha (אם-בְּהַקְטִי, תִּלְכוּ) which talks about the Schar of Mitzvos, we find every letter of the Aleph Bais except for the letter Samech. The reason for that is because the Samech represents the sixty letters in Duchaning and those sixty letters, the Beracha of Duchaning is independent of (אם-בְּהַקְטִי, תִּלְכוּ), it is independent of deserving it. Even if you don't deserve it, even without (אם-בְּהַקְטִי, תִּלְכוּ), Birchas Kohanim brings Beracha to a person. This is what is says in the Rokeach.

Rav Druk brings from the Magen Avraham in his Pirush (זית רענן) on the Medrash where he says the same thing. He says why do I need Duchaning if it is dependent on Zechusim. The Torah already says (אם-בְּהַקְטִי, תִּלְכוּ) that you will get Beracha. It must be that Nesias Kapayim is without Zechusim. It is something onto itself which has the power to bring blessing.

Rav Druk then brings from the Netziv in (בעמק הנציב) on the Sifri that says the reverse and the language of the Sifri supports it, which says that (ישא ד' פניו אליך), HKB"Y turns his face to you when you deserve it. Rav Druk would like to answer and to explain and the truth is that it needs an explanation anyway. Why should Duchaning bring Beracha upon a person independently? Well if it is a Gizairas Hakasuv then it is a Gizairas Hakasuv. With Rav Druk's insight we have some explanation.

I will add, we do Nesias Kapayim in Shemoneh Esrei. It would seem to be a separate Mitzvah and nothing to do with Shemoneh Esrei. When do we do Duchaning in Shemoneh Esrei? Duchaning is a Mitzvah. We the Bnei Ashkenaz do it only in Mussaf. Why? The reason we do it only on Yom Tov is because we only do it at a time of Simcha. Once it is a time of Simcha then do it at Shacharis as well?

The answer is that Duchaning is fundamentally tied to Avodah. The original Duchaning is in the Posuk that can be found in Vayikra 9:22 (וַיִּשָּׂא אֶהָרֶן אֶת-יָדָיו אֶל-הָעָם, וַיְבָרְכֵם; וַיֵּרָד, מִעֲשֶׂת הַחֹטְאֹת). At the time that he brought a Korban Chatas for the Am, Aharon lifted up his hands and gave them a Beracha. This is before Parshas Naso and before the Mitzvah of Nesias Kapayim. That is, we see from there that Birchas Kohanim is tied to the Avodah.

There is a Gemara in Maseches Megillah 18a (top of page) that says Duchaning is found in Shemoneh Esrei right after the Avodah and Hodaa as it says in the Posuk in Tehillim 50:23 (זָבַח תְּהוֹדֶה, יִכְבְּדֶנּוּנִי). Those who bring a Korban of thanks give me honor. That after you bring a Korban and are Mode to the Ribbono Shel Olam the Avodah and being Modeh to Hashem which is all part of the Avodah that opens up the door for Nesias Kapayim.

What that means in more simple words is that the Beracha of Duchaning doesn't require the Zechusim of Ameilus Batorah, doesn't require Zechusim of Kiyum Mitzvos. So it is separate from (אם-בְּהַקְטִי, תִּלְכוּ). But it still requires something. It requires that a person be an Oved Hashem. That a person say Hodaa to Hashem. That a person do those aspects of connection to HKB"Y which come with Korbanos, with Avodah, with the Shemoneh Esrei today.

In Shemoneh Esrei we say the Beracha of Avodah, the Beracha of Hodaa and then we Duchan. Because Beracha of Birchas Kohanim comes when somebody is an Oved Hashem. When somebody wants to serve Hashem and his actions he may be missing, he may not be learning adequately or Davening properly but if his head is on right, his Hashkafos are on right and he sees

himself as someone who is connected to the Ribbono Shel Olam for Avodah and Hodaa then the Beracha comes. This is an incredible thought that Avodah, Hodaa in itself bring Beracha.

I once mentioned that every time we praise Hashem we ask afterwards for a blessing. In Hallel we say Hallel to Hashem and then we say as is found in Tehillim 118:25 (אָנָּא יְדוּד, הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא). What is (אָנָּא יְדוּד, הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא) doing in Hallel? The answer is Hodaa, being Modeh to HKB”H, praising Hashem for what you had is connected to Beracha. That Birchas Kohanim would seem to be the primary Beracha that comes with Modim, (found after Modim) but it is a general rule that every time we praise HKB”H afterwards we are Mevakeish, we say Modim and then we say Sim Shalom. Sim Shalom has the most Bakashos. What is it doing in the part of Shemoneh Esrei called Hodaa? Sim Shalom asks for every single blessing and we need to be in middle of Shemoneh Esrei? The answer is that after you praise HKB”H there is a door open for Beracha. When you say Sim Shalom it is part of the praise of Hashem, a recognition that everything comes from HKB”H. That brings Beracha. And so, our first Yesod for this week that Hodaa brings Beracha. Duchaning brings Beracha even if a person is not deserving.

2. Let’s move to a second Yesod. The idea of (בְּרוּךְ הַגִּבּוֹר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בּוֹ), of Bitachon, is something that we find in this week’s Haftorah. Of course it belongs in the Haftorah of the Parsha of the Tochacha, the Parsha of punishment. It ends with a message for a person to be a Boteach Bashem. Actually the Haftorah says it in a much stronger language as is found in Yirmiya 17:5 (אָרוּר הַגִּבּוֹר (אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בְּאָדָם). So that the blessing of Bitachon is preceded by the curse for those who put their faith in people.

I would like to Kler the same Chakira as I did for Duchaning regarding Bitachon. How does Bitachon work? Does Bitachon in and of itself bring Beracha. You are Boteach BaHashem so then you have Beracha or does Bitachon work that if you have Zechusim, you are deserving?

To answer, I would like to point out to you a letter in the Kraina D’igrisa from the Steipler in Cheilek Gimmel letter Hei. There he was asked a question of Bitachon and he writes, someone who has complete Bitachon, he should go with Bitachon in the line of the Shittas Haramban. There are very few people today who can claim the Bitachon of the Ramban, and in general we go with Bitachon of the Chovos Helevavos.

He assumes that the person reading the letter knows what Bitachon like the Shittas Haramban is and what Bitachon like the Shittas Chovos Halevavos is. Most people today really have no clue.

It is interesting that similarly the Chofetz Chaim writes in the Sefer Sheim Olam, he talks about Bitachon Ke’shittas Chovos Halevavos K’ilu everyone knows. Let me tell you the difference of opinion between the Ramban and the Chovos Halevavos because it is a fundamental question.

The Ramban holds in his Maimar Emunah Ubitachon which incidentally is printed in the Kol Kisevei Haramban, the Ramban’s Shitta is that Bitachon is independent of anything else. Bitachon can bring Beracha in and of itself. (וְרַחֲמֵינוּ, עַל-כָּל-מַעֲשָׂיו). HKB”H’s Rachmanus itself can bring Hatzlacha. It is totally independent. When you have full Bitachon you can bring every Beracha that you need. Zero Hishtadlus is needed and even Zechusim are not needed.

The Chovos Halevavos on the other hand, in the Shaar Bitachon Perek Gimmel, in his Hakdama Harevius, he disagrees fundamentally. He says how could it be that someone who doesn't obey HKB"H's commands is going to have Bitachon in Hashem and be blessed? It is not logical. The Mishnah says in Maseches Avos 2:4 (עשה רצונו כרצונך, כדי שיעשה רצונך כרצונו). The Chovos Halevavos says that Bitachon only works when a person has Zechusim. So the Ramban says that Bitachon can do anything way more than what you would otherwise deserve and the Chovos Halevavos says no Bitachon can only work with what you have.

Each of these Shittos is very difficult to understand at face value. The Ramban says that Bitachon can do anything even if a person has no Zechusim. The question is why that should be, why should a person without Zechusim be blessed.

The Chovos Halevavos holds that you need Zechusim. If you need Zechusim, so the Kasha is what is the Mitzvah of Bitachon that whatever you deserve you will get, is that Bitachon? It needs an explanation.

First, Halacha L'mayseh. Says the Steipler in Kraina D'igrisa in Cheilek Gimmel letter Hei that the Ramban's Shitta that Bitachon itself brings everything is for Yichidai Segula. They need no Hishtadlus, even Zechusim are not needed. Bitachon itself will bring Beracha. For the rest of us, for the Hamon Am, we go with the Shittah of the Chovos Halevavos. You can't have Bitachon for something you don't deserve but you should have Bitachon that whatever you deserve HKB"H will give you. The Kasha then is what is the Mitzvah of Bitachon, to trust that Hashem pays on time, gives what you deserve? If you have an honest human being L'havdil, you will believe that about him too.

The Yesod is the following. It is true that when you do Hishtadlus it helps. Because without doing, Bitachon itself it is inadequate. That is what the Steipler writes in the letter where he is writing about purchasing health insurance. He says someone who is a Chovos Halevavos Yid should buy health insurance and be Mishtadeil because his Bitachon will not bring him everything.

What is the Mitzvah of Bitachon? If it is to believe that whatever you can get through Hishtadlus you can also get through Bitachon if only you deserve it. You have to work on your Bitachon.

The Bais Halevi at the beginning of Miketz says Hishtadlus is to do enough Hishtadlus that at some point you can say ok HKB"H, at this point I am a Boteach. I needed to do some Hishtadlus I am not a Tzaddik Gamur I couldn't be Boteach without some effort. But with some effort after that everything else is Bitachon. We don't control our destiny and therefore we do whatever it is that is necessary to reach that level. (בְּרוּךְ הַגִּבּוֹר אֲשֶׁר יְבַטֵּחַ בָּד). So this is a Yesod in Bitachon, there is tremendous depth to it and it requires a lot of learning, a lot of understanding. There is a Sefer Maimar Alav Bitachon which deals with it beautifully.

3. I would like to end with a Kasha. The Ramban holds that Bitachon can do anything, totally independent of Zechusim. If you have enough Bitachon it will always work. If that is so, how do we explain the Yissurai Hatzaddikim. How do we explain that someone like Moshe Rabbeinu didn't go into Eretz Yisrael, he should have had Bitachon. If having Bitachon does it then it works. How do we explain that the Tanna Rabbi Akiva was killed. He should have had full Bitachon that

the HKB”H would save him and it would work. The Ramban’s Shitta is that Bitachon can do anything. This is a Tzorech Iyun Gadol on how the Ramban’s Shitta is supposed to work B’poel, it certainly needs explanation.

Certainly there are Pesukim in Tanach that fit like in Tehillim 27:3 (אִם-תִּתְחַנֶּה עָלַי, מִחַנָּה לֹא-יִירָא ) (לְבַי:אִם-תִּקְוֶה עָלַי, מִלִּקְחָהּ בְּזֹאת, אֲנִי בֹטָח). There are Pesukim that indicate that Bitachon can do anything. But absolutely anything? Tzorech Biyur.

The bottom line is that we have to think about Bitachon. We live in a world of Hishtadlus. Give it some thought. Put some effort into it. Perhaps learn this letter of the Kraina D’igrisa, it is a beautiful letter. Something very appropriate for the Shabbos table.

Certainly appropriate for a Hachana for Mattan Torah. The upcoming wonderful 3 days, Shabbos, Sunday, Monday a 3 day Kabbalas Hatorah. A day of preparation which will be Shabbos, people don’t go to work and aren’t distracted. A Sunday, a Leil Shavuos which comes right after Shabbos. People will be well rested to stay up all night and then the third day which is the second day of Shavuos, Monday. We are so looking forward. A Gutten Shabbos to one and all!

#### **Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Bechukosai 5774**

1. I would like to share with you first a thought on the first section of the Parsha. The first 11 Pesukim as you know contain the opposite of the Tochacha. They contain on the contrary a listing of Berachos (blessings) that come to Klal Yisrael (אִם-בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ, תִּלְכַּח). Rav Druk in his Sefer brings that in these 11 Pesukim every letter of the Aleph Bais appears with the exception of the letter Samach which does not appear. The Rokeach makes note that the letter Samach does not appear. Reading this in Rav Druk’s Sefer Darash Mordechai (on page # 257) reminds me of the fact that the same thing holds true of Beraishis. The 7 days of creation, the entire Perek Aleph of Sefer Beraishis contains every letter of the Aleph Bais including the Ende letters as well, except the Samach. The Samach there does not appear. Halo Davar Hu!

Another interesting thing is that in the many thousands of Pesukim in the Torah there are only two Pesukim that begin with the letter Samach. That itself is highly unusual. The two Pesukim are Bamidbar 14:19 (סָלַח-נָא, לְעֹון הָעָם הַזֶּה--כְּגִדְלִי חֲסִדְךָ) Moshe Rabbeinu asking for forgiveness after the story of the Miraglim and Shemos 32:8 (סָרוּ מִהֵרָ, מִן-הַדֶּבֶר) part of the (Maiseh) Eigel. It is strange that the Samach only appears in connection to misdeeds, to Aveiros that a person does. Halo Davar Hu! It is a very strange thing and it needs an explanation.

Adding to this is that on Tisha B’av our Kinnus by day begins with the word Suru, with the letter Samach. As a matter of fact it starts with a letter Samach of a Kinna. The Kinna goes in the order of the Aleph Bais but it starts with the letter Samach. Halo Davar Hu! The Samach seems to appear or not appear for some sort of a deeper meaning or understanding.

I would like to share with you a thought which I had heard I believe from Rav Moshe Shapiro and the Yesod is the following. The Samach is a letter which is a circle. If you draw a line the line can go anywhere. It can go up, it can go down, it can go around, it can twist and turn. When you draw

a circle no matter how much you twist and turn you come back to the original point. The tragedy of this world is when people live the life of a circle. They just go and come back to where they are. They go and come back to where they are. They are not really heading anywhere. Every day is like the day before, they eat, they sleep, they earn, they spend, and really their life is heading nowhere. So the Samach in a way is a symbol of a pathetic life, of a sad life, a life of an ant which just provides for its young and then disappears and then its offspring does the same. That should not be the life of a human being. The Samach, the circle, is not good, it is not desirable in a spiritual life. In a physical world, however, the whole world is circles, the whole world is cycles. All of nature is a cycle, a cycle which repeats itself. Circles, revolutions, that repeat themselves. The universe is full of circles, of orbits, of planets which by and large are spheres. In general the circle is part of the Gashmiusdika world, the idea of the cycle that repeats itself. As a matter of fact the first Samach in the Torah is in Beraishis 2:11 (שם האָד, פֿישׁוֹן--הוּא הַסָּבֵב, אֵת כָּל-אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּלָּה) a Posuk which describes (סָבֵב) going in a circle. It describes the great rivers of the world which flow in what is basically a continuous cycle of water, evaporation, and new rain. So that Samach is wonderful for the physical world but not desirable for the spiritual world. Therefore, in Maaseh Beraishis there is no Samach and therefore, in (אֵם-בְּחֻקֶּי, תִּלְכוּ) it would make sense that there is no Samach.

The Samach appears at the beginning of the Kinnos of Tisha B'av at the Aveiros of (סָלַח-נָא) and (סָרוּ מֵהָרָה). This is an explanation which I had once heard and it made a Roshom on me, a very strong impression. The idea that a person should not be repeating everything that he has done. A person should be learning from what he did and constantly be growing and certainly G-d forbid not regressing.

Rav Druk on the other hand brings a different message with the letter Samach. He brings I believe as well from the Sefer Rokeach that the letter Samach symbolizes something quite positive. Birchas Kohanim, the Nesias Kapaim which the Kohanim bless the people contains in it 60 letters. Samach, 60 letters. What is so unique about Birchas Kohanim? Says the Rokeach (אֵם-בְּחֻקֶּי, תִּלְכוּ) you will be blessed if you go with my Chukim, it is a condition, if you will follow the laws of the Torah then you will be blessed. That does not include the Samach. Birchas Kohanim is above that. Birchas Kohanim is an unconditional blessing. It is a blessing even without the (אֵם-בְּחֻקֶּי, תִּלְכוּ), even without deserving it. That is what is special about the Beracha of a Kohen. We can add explanation to this that HKB"Y's job is to judge the world. Kavayochel HKB"Y set his heavenly Bais Din as a judge on human beings actions, and therefore, blessing which comes from heaven comes based on that judgment. Blessings which comes from people, however, are different. A human being is not supposed to judge his fellow human being. A human being is certainly not supposed to punish or withhold favor from another human being. So that when HKB"Y allows Kohanim to give a Beracha it is unconditional. HKB"Y's blessing through the Kohanim (אֵם-בְּחֻקֶּי, תִּלְכוּ) is conditional, that is from heaven. The Samach is separate from that, it is independent of that. And so, although as in our first Vort, the letter Samach talks about a cycle, a cycle which has nothing to do with growth, Birchas Kohanim also is something that has nothing to do with growth. It is a blessing which HKB"Y gives through Kohanim and it has nothing to do with a person's growth. A person who goes to Nesiyas Kapayim and as the Shulchan Aruch says pays attention to Hashem's blessing through the Kohanim, he has that wonderful Beracha. That is why Birchas Kohanim, Nesias Kapayim is a very special Beracha and that it is why it is a Refuah for a bad dream, in a case where a bad dream has a bad meaning. In general, going to Birchas Kohanim and

being part of Birchas Kohanim is a wonderful opportunity for Beracha. (This is I guess a short 8 minute idea of the letter Samach, there is much more to be said on this, IY”H we will get to it someday probably on a Motzoei Shabbos).

2. Let me turn to another topic. My discussion so far was focused on the first part of the Parsha the part of (אם-בְּתִקְתִּי, תִּלְכוּ), the positive. Following that is the Tochacha. The Tochacha which talks about the punishments which have unfortunately befallen Klal Yisrael in our centuries of Galus. The Tochacha ends with as it says in 26:46 ( בִּינֹו וּבֵין בְּנֵי ) אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְרוֹר, אֶת-מִשְׁפָּטֵי, וְהַתּוֹרָה, אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְרוֹר, בֵּינוּ וּבֵין בְּנֵי ( בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה ). It ends by referring to everything that has been said as have been given on Har Sinai (בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה). The word (בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה) appears many many times in the Torah. We have V'zos Hatorah Asher Tzivah Hashem B'yad Moshe. We have at the end of Bamidbar 36:13 ( אֶלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת ) אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְרוֹר בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה--אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּעֶרְבַת מוֹאָב, עַל יַרְדֵּן יְרַחוּ (בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה). What does the (בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה) signify, and what does it refer to the hands of Moshe?

The Derech of the Netziv in his extraordinary Hameik Davar on Chumash is to reveal to us the meaning of many code words in the Torah. Many times the Torah uses an expression many times and it has got to have some deeper meaning, some significant meaning. The Netziv has this incredible power to reveal and throughout Chumash keep on referring back to his Yesod in the meaning of words. In the case of (בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה) the Netziv refers us to an idea which is found in Maseches Nedarim 38a (top of the Amud) where the Gemara says on the words (פסל לך) the Pilpula Shel Torah, the ability to bring out Torah so to speak, (פסל לך) is to etch out the Luchos. The ability to dig and be Mechadeish Chidushei Torah (Pilpula D'oraissa), that power was given not to Klal Yisrael but to Moshe Rabbeinu specifically. The Gemara says that at some point Moshe Rabbeinu (נהג בה טובת עין ונתנה לישראל) had an Ayin Tov and gave it to Klal Yisrael. The power of Pilpula D'oraissa was given specifically to Moshe. The Rosh in Maseches Nedarim calls it an understanding in a sharp way to see all the wisdom of Torah through Pilpula D'oraissa which comes about only through Hur'ving, through hard work in understanding Torah. That is (בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה).

At the end of Parshas Bechukosai we have a Posuk which is found with slightly different words, at the end of Bamidbar. Both the book of Vayikra and the book of Bamidbar end with a reference to (אֶלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת). All the aforementioned have been the Mitzvos that are Tzivah Hashem. However, there is a difference, in Vayikra it ends (אֶלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת, אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְרוֹר אֶת-מֹשֶׁה--אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּהַר, סִינַי), it mentions Har Sinai. At the end of Bamidbar it ends as is found in 36:13 ( אֶלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת וְהַמִּשְׁפָּטִים, אֲשֶׁר ) (צִוָּה יְרוֹר בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה--אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּעֶרְבַת מוֹאָב, עַל יַרְדֵּן יְרַחוּ). Instead of Har Sinai it says B'yad Moshe. The Netziv explains that (בְּהַר, סִינַי) are the things that were given to Moshe to be taught to Klal Yisrael. Until the end of his life that is all Moshe Rabbeinu taught Klal Yisrael. At the very end, Bamidbar ends and Devarim begins with (בִּינֵי-מֹשֶׁה). With the Pilpula D'oraissa which were meant for Klal Yisrael. The Netziv mentions it here and he mentions it in the beginning of Devarim (1:3). We all know that Devarim is Mishna Torah, a review of Torah. What review of Torah, the Jews spent the whole 40 years in the Midbar reviewing Torah, they did that all the time. The answer is that Moshe Rabbeinu now in Devarim 1:5 (בְּעֶבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן, בְּאֶרְץ מוֹאָב, הוֹאִיל מֹשֶׁה, בָּאֵר אֶת-הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת ) (לֵאמֹר). A (בָּאֵר) is a well spring. The 40 years Moshe Rabbeinu taught what he received at Sinai. At the end of the 40 years he taught them Pilpula D'oraissa, he taught them that Torah is a well spring of Chidush. It is something that a person through proper Ameilus, and following the rules of Pilpula D'oraissa can accomplish through his Pilpul D'oraissa. This is the Yesod of the Netziv.

The Netziv adds that Pilpula D'oraissa is crucial for Torah in Galus. When Klal Yisrael goes to Galus and doesn't have a central Sanhedrin there is a tremendous need for Pilpula D'oraissa. Torah has to be a living Torah. The Torah has to have Chidush, a person sits for hours figuring it out, struggling, Hur'ving, trying to delve deeper into Torah. This idea that it is needed for Galus is Mirumaz, it is hinted in the last Navi's Nevuah in Malachai 3:22 (זָכְרוּ, תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עִבְדִּי, אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי (אֹתוֹ בְּהָרֵב עַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל, חֲקִים וּגְמֻשָּׁפְטִים). Remember the Torah of Moshe my servant, which I commanded him in Choreiv. Those words are extra. Of course we all know that Moshe was commanded with the Torah at Choreiv. Says the Netziv, (זָכְרוּ, תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עִבְדִּי, אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי אֹתוֹ). There is something I gave only him at Har Sinai and that is Pilpula D'oraissa. When you go to Galus (זָכְרוּ, תּוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עִבְדִּי) through Pilpula D'oraissa you will have the great Hatzlacha in your learning. If you go through the history of the Galus. Yoshiyahu Hamelech who hid the Aron because he knew that Klal Yisrael would go to Galus. He set up Hacheireish V'hamasgir Elef, Kulam Oseh Milchama. He set up the (וְהִקְרָשׁ וְהַמְסַגֵּר אֶלָּף) Cheireish and the Masgir those who were a thousand of them, those who can do the Milchamta Shel Torah.

Getting back to our Posuk at the end of the Tochacha when Klal Yisrael is in Galus, HKB"H ends by saying that you need in order to survive in Galus to have the Mitzvos, Chukim, Mishpatim, that were given by Har Sinai, B'yad Moshe. That that was given at Har Sinai to the hands of Moshe through Pilpula D'oraissa. Pilpula D'oraissa the Chiyus of Torah, the living in Torah, the Torah that lights up a Yid during the periods of time that he is in the darkness of Galus. The ability to be a Mifalpeil B'torah to allow the Torah to give you strength and energy, that incredible Koach, that Koach that keeps us going on Thursday nights at Mishmar and in Galus in general.

As we prepare for Kabbalas Hatorah what better Vort then to understand these Nikudos. I mentioned a drop in the bucket of what the Netziv says. I invite you to look at the Netziv not only in this week's Parsha in Perek 26:46 but also in the beginning of Devarim in 1:3 (on the word Aleihem) and specifically in the two sections where it is labeled Harcheiv Davar under the Netziv. Get a good appreciation of Pilpula D'oraissa the Chiyus of Torah, the importance of learning. And so, a Vort on the beginning of the Parsha on the letter Samach one at the end of the Tochacha and the word B'yad Moshe. A Gutten Shabbos to all!

### **Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Bichukosai 5771**

The Minhag brought in the Rama is that since Lag B'omer falls out on a Sunday the custom is that you take the haircut or shave on Friday Erev Shabbos rather than taking it directly after Shabbos. It has to be L'kovad Shabbos so that if you take a shave or haircut on Friday morning you would not be permitted to take another shave on Friday afternoon. You get one time on Friday to take this haircut and shave for L'kovod Shabbos.

**26:21, 26:24, 26:28...** - The Tochacha is the most famous part of Parshas Bichukosai. The first Dvar Torah is a Halacha that is related to the Tochacha. There are many references to (וְאֵם-תִּלְכּוּ ) (עֲמִי קָרִי). This is a certain type of behavior that Klal Yisrael has with the Ribbono Shel Olam. It is an undesirable behavior, which is to act in a nonchalant way in Avodas Hashem. The Taz in Aruch Chaim **191:1** writes, that (וְאֵם-תִּלְכּוּ עֲמִי קָרִי) is the source for the Halacha brought there in Shulchan Aruch that when someone is performing a Mitzvah or making a Beracha he should not be doing

something else at the same time. For example, when a person is making a Beracha like Bentching, he should not be clearing off the table. They are violating (ואם-תלכו עמי קרי) because they are performing the Mitzvah in a nonchalant off hand way. A Mitzvah is supposed to be performed in a manner which shows the Chashivus of the Mitzvah and nothing else should be done with it at the same time.

As a matter of fact, the Shulchan Aruch in **191:3** says it is Assur to do other things while Bentching. It is there that the Taz brings the Halacha of (ואם-תלכו עמי קרי) something that I guess we would do well to remind ourselves of, that Mitzvos should be done complete and nothing should be done Derech Agav at the time that a person is doing the Mitzvah.

The Mishna Berura in Siman **63:19** asks that we find by the Dinim of Birchos Kriyas Shema that the Bais Yosef allows a person to put on Tefillin if they came at the same time that he is saying Birchas Kriyas Shema. This means that when a person started to Daven there were no Tefillin available to him and during Birchos Kriyas Shema they were made available to him. The Mishna Berura asks why this is so that while a person is reciting the Birchas Kriyas Shema is he permitted to put on Tefillin. At the time of putting on the Tefillin he is reciting the Birchas Kriyas Shema and during the time that he is reciting the Birchas Kriyas Shema he is putting on Tefillin. That would seem to be a double issue of doing two things simultaneously. The Mishna Berura remains with a Tzorech Iyun.

B'derech Efshar, maybe we can explain as follows. That to do two different Mitzvos together is perhaps a Bizayon to each and then neither Mitzva has a Chashivus. However, wearing Tefillin for Kriyas Shema certainly and Birchos Kriyas Shema is a Hiddur in Birchos Kriyas Shema. The reverse is true as well. It is a Hiddur for Kriyas Shema to be wearing Tefillin during Kriyas Shema. It is mentioned twice in Shulchan Aruch the idea to touch one's Tefillin during Kriyas Shema when he mentions the Tefillin in Kriyas Shema. It is mentioned once in Hilchos Tefillin and a second time in Hilchos Kriyas Shema. We see that it is a Hiddur to be Mimashmeish the Tefillin during Kriyas Shema and saying Kriyas Shema when one has Tefillin on is a Hiddur the other way. So perhaps when the thing that you are doing simultaneous with the Mitzva comes as a Hiddur in the Mitzva, that is not something that is Derech Agav and there is a Chashivus to it. It is a Chashivus to Birchos Kriyas Shema to put on Tefillin and a Chashivus to Tefillin to be saying Birchos Kriyas Shema so perhaps that is the exception.

If what I am saying is correct it would answer a Minhag Haolam. It is the custom of people who wash for Hamotzi who subsequently make an Al Nitalas Yadaim, the custom among people is to wipe their hands as they are making the Beracha. As someone pointed out to me, this seems to violate this rule that when a person is making a Beracha he shouldn't be doing anything else. If so, a person should first make the Beracha and then wipe his hands, something that is not the common practice. As a matter of fact, if you look at the Mishna Berura **158:14** and if you are Midayaik properly from the last line, it seems that the Mishnah Berura at least condones such behavior. I am not saying to do it, however, to answer the Minhag, perhaps it is for this reason. Part of the Mitzvah of Al Nitalas Yadaim is that we wipe our hands not because they should not be wet, but because that is part of the Mitzvah. As a matter of fact the Beracha goes on the wiping as well. Perhaps, this is the reason that wiping the hands has a Shaychus to the Beracha and the Beracha has a Shaychus to the wiping and that might be an answer for the Minhag Haolam.

A thought and a reaction for reading the Tochacha. Rav Tzaddok says in Tzidkos Hatzaddik in Os **153** that Agmus Nefesh (the mental anguish) that a person has on an Aveira takes the place of punishment. In other words the Ribbono Shel Olam doesn't punish just for the sake of punishment. The Ribbono Shel Olam punishes because that is supposed to bring a reaction to a Yid. A Yid who endures a difficulty has a reaction that we hope is positive. If so, if a person so to speak beats the Ribbono Shel Olam to the result and before the punishment comes the mental anguish he has for the Aveira for the punishment that he deserves is there, then a person doesn't need that punishment.

I recall once seeing in Rav Schwab's Sefer, that the Leviim in Mitzrayim as we know did not work the Shibud of Mitzrayim and Rav Schwab asks why not. It says in Parshas Lech Lecha **15:13** (וַעֲבָדוּם, וְעָנּוּ אֹתָם--אֶרְבַּע מְאוֹת, שָׁנָה) and this applies to Klal Yisrael and especially if we understand that the work in Mitzrayim was purposeful and it wasn't work for the sake of punishment. Chazal refer to it as the Kur Habarzel. If it was purposeful why did the Leviim lose this benefit that came from working in Mitzrayim?

Rav Schwab answered, the Leviim being on a higher Madreiga were able to feel the mental anguish and difficulty of Klal Yisrael in the work that they were doing in Mitzrayim. They felt the anguish and the pain, that was all part of what was supposed to be intended in what was happening in Mitzrayim. They did not need to be able to do the work because they had the feeling of the Tzar and the mental anguish takes the place of the Tzar. And so reading the Tochacha which Klal Yisrael has traditionally taken very seriously as we know people didn't want to have the Aliyah, (perhaps that came from superstition). That is all from a person taking the Tochacha seriously and someone who takes the message in the Tochacha seriously can save himself G-d forbid from the actual Yesurim. A feeling and mental anguish that comes with the idea of deserving such Yesurim.

The following is from Rav Schwab in Sefer Iyun Tefilla. First we will be Makdim with a question. When we read the Tochacha or the words of the Neviim Achronim we understand that going into Galus was a punishment. It is something which comes because Klal Yisrael is not deserving. Devarim **29:27** says (וַיִּשְׁלַכְם אֱל-אֶרֶץ אַחֲרַת, כִּיֹּם הִנֵּה) (וַיִּתְּשֶׁם יְיָ רִוְךְ מֵעַל אֲדָמָתָם, בָּאֵף וּבַחֲמָה וּבְקִצְף גָּדוֹל; וַיִּשְׁלַכְם אֱל-אֶרֶץ אַחֲרַת, כִּיֹּם הִנֵּה). Hakadosh Baruch Hu ripped Klal Yisrael off of its land in anger. Anger sounds like a punishment. Where as we say in this week's Parsha **26:33** (וְאֶתְכֶם אֲזַרֶה בְּגוֹיִם) that I will scatter you amongst the nations. It certainly sounds like a punishment.

That doesn't fit with the Baalei Machshava and in general in Torah She'bal Peh. That the Galus itself is purposeful and there is something to be accomplished in the Galus. As the Gemara says in Maseches Pesachim **87b** (17 lines from the bottom) (וְאָמַר ר' אִי לֹא הִגְלָה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבֵין) (וַיִּתְּשֶׁם לִי בְּאֶרֶץ כְּלוּם אָדָם זֹרַע סָאָה אֲלֵא לְהַכְנִיס כְּמָה) (וַיִּתְּשֶׁם לִי בְּאֶרֶץ כְּלוּם אָדָם זֹרַע סָאָה אֲלֵא לְהַכְנִיס כְּמָה). Klal Yisrael went to Galus to collect the holy souls among the nations of the world.

As Rav Tzaddok explains in Resisai Laila **84**, it doesn't only mean (גרים) people who convert, but even concepts or energy among the Umos Haolam. We go into Galus sort of to collect these things. The proof to that is that in the Bris Bain Habesarim Avraham Avinu is already foretold about the 4 Galusin. According to this way of looking at Galus the Galus is purposeful and it is here for constructive reasons and not just a punishment.

That doesn't fit well with the language of Torah She'b'chsav. For this we turn to Rav Schwab in the Halilukas of Pesukai D'zimra. He explains that Torah She'b'chsav is Middas Hadin and Torah She'bal Peh works with Middas Harachamim.

So to say in the Chumash it says in Parshas Mishpatim **21:24** (עֵין תַּחַת עֵין, שֵׁן תַּחַת שֵׁן, יָד תַּחַת יָד, רֶגֶל (תַּחַת רֶגֶל)). An eye for an eye a tooth for a tooth. The Torah She'bal Peh says that is Middas Hadin which is what a person truly deserves, however, there is Middas Harachamim mixed in and therefore it is enough to pay.

In Parshas Ki Sai'tzai it says in **25:12** (וְקָצַתָּהּ, אֶת-כַּפֶּיהָ) a punishment of cutting off a hand, and again the Torah She'b'chsav says cut off the hand while Torah She'bal Peh mixes it with Middas Harachamim and says to pay instead of cutting off a hand.

We find so too with the sins of Gedolei Olam of Klal Yisrael. Where the words of the Chumash say that Reuvain did one Aveira and the Torah She'bal Peh says no it is not quite the way it happened. So too with all of the Aveiras of the Gedolei Yisrael. The Torah She'b'chsav expresses it with Middas Hadin and Torah She'bal Peh is constantly a mixture of Middas Harachamim.

With this Rav Schwab explains that we say in Tehillim **149:8-9** (לְאַסֵּר מַלְכֵיהֶם בְּזַקִּים; וּנְכַבְּדֵיהֶם, בְּכִבְלֵי) ברֶגֶל לַעֲשׂוֹת בָּהֶם, מִשְׁפָּט כְּתוּב-- הָדָר הוּא, לְכַל-הַסִּידוֹי (הַלְלוּ- כָּה) That Hakadosh Baruch Hu will punish the Umos Haolam with (מִשְׁפָּט כְּתוּב) the written judgment. What is the difference if the judgment is written or not? He explains that the punishment there is with the Middas Hadin. That is called (מִשְׁפָּט כְּתוּב) the written judgment.

We find similarly by Amaleik in Shemos **17:14** (כָּתַב זֹאת זְכָרוֹן בַּסֵּפֶר) that the erasing of Amaleik has to be written in the Sefer. That is with Middas Hadin. So that The Torah She'bal Peh is the mixture of Din and Rachamim and Torah She'b'chsav expresses it with Middas Hadin.

With this we can understand that the Tochacha and all of the Nivuos regarding the Galus are written with Middas Hadin. There is no Sheker in it. It is that Klal Yisrael deserves this as a punishment. So the Ribbono Shel Olam doesn't do anything to Klal Yisrael unless there is Middas Rachamim mixed in as well.

**The question of the week is regarding Lag B'omer:** As you know it has become of the custom to have Lag B'omer festivities most often on the night that we count Lag B'omer which is on Motzoei Shabbos. Fires are lit and music is played and dancing takes place. I don't understand. The Rama explains quite clear that Lag B'omer is part of Sefira and the reason one is permitted to listen to music on Lag B'omer is because of Mikzas Hayom K'kuloi which occurs after daybreak and then it is considered as if the 33<sup>rd</sup> day has passed.

The language of the Mishna Berura is, to get married I know only of a Heter to get married by the day of Lag B'omer but not the night before. At least L'chatchila that certainly is the Halacha, that all of the Heteirim of Lag B'omer begins by day. Why has it become the custom to have festivities on the night of Lag B'omer which seems to be in violation of Halacha. Some may say that that is the Minhag. However, anybody my age or older and even those that come from Europe will recall

no such thing. In America until 15 – 20 years or so ago. There were no festivities at night. Maybe in Tzefas there is such a Minhag, I don't know. Why have we in Chutz L'aretz seized this Minhag? I wonder. I am sure that there is an answer. There are Tzaddikim who are involved in these festivities and I am sure that there is a Cheshbon. From where does it come? If it against the Mishna Berura then I shouldn't be participating in it. Tzorech Iyun Gadol.

We should be Zoche that Lag B'omer that begins the third of Sefira that connect to Kabbalas Hatorah, the third 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Sefiras Haomer and that is the part that we try to prepare for Shavuos in the proper way with a connection to Limud Hatorah.