



# 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 רחל נחמה ויעקב בן רחל נחמה.  
MAY THEY GROW TO BE TALMIDEI CHACHAMIM AND OVDEI HASHEM.

## PEARLS OF WISDOM FROM THE PARSHAH

## The Tzaddik and the Freebee

וְאֶתְחַנֵּן אֵל ה' (דברים ג, כג)

**I pleaded for Hashem's grace. (Devarim 3:23)**

***Chinun* always implies a freewill gift. Although the *tzaddikim* could request from Hashem based on their good deeds, they ask only a freewill gift. (Rashi)**

When a *tzaddik* asks something of Hashem, it is always as a freewill gift, as if he is not worthy of it. And he does this not despite being *tzaddik* but because he is a *tzaddik*.

Here's an example.

Imagine a very wealthy man. He owns a lot of property worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Then something bad happens. The people of a certain city are in grave danger due to the decree of an evil king. The wealthy man sells all his property, and bribes the king with the cash thereby obtained. This saves all the people of the city from sure death!

There is no doubt that this Jew did a tremendous *mitzvah*. But now he is totally

impoverished. He has nothing left for himself. He has no home and not even food to eat. He gave everything for the sake of the *mitzvah* of *chesed* that he did.

There are two ways this man could beseech Hashem. He could say: *Ribono Shel Olam*, I didn't really have to give away everything like that. I could very well have left myself a modest sum to live on. But now that I gave everything, at least give me a slice of bread to eat. Don't I, too, deserve something, after all I did to help and rescue Jewish people from their plight?

Or he could say like this: *Ribono Shel Olam*, You were so kind to me! I know that You could have rescued the people of the city by Yourself. But you gave me the opportunity to rescue them by selling off

my property so I will merit doing such a wonderful *mitzvah*. The truth is I don't deserve anything, but I am asking You for a slice of bread to eat, as a freewill gift.

These are the two ways how to look at any situation in life.

*Moshe Rabbeinu* said: *Ribono Shel Olam*, I don't deserve anything at all. You gave me the opportunity to bring the Jewish people out of Egypt and receive the Torah for them. You gave me so many amazing *zechuyos*. I don't deserve anything at all, not even to go to the Land with the rest of the people. I am just asking as a mere gift that I should allowed entry to

*Eretz Yisrael*.

This is indeed a high *madreigah*. But it is the right way to look at life. If we ask things from *Hashem* because we think we deserve it, then *Hashem* tallies things up to see what we did and what we already received for it and what we still have coming to us, if anything. We might think we "deserve" this and that, but can we be sure that *Hashem* sees it that way?

But if we just ask for a gracious gift, knowing that we don't really deserve it, then we are approaching *Hashem* like a son does to a loving father. And this opens the gates of unlimited blessing. ●

## Everything is Double

נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ עַמִּי יֹאמֶר אֱלֹקֵיכֶם. (הפטרה)

“By consoled, be consoled, My people,” says Your G-d. (*Devarim* 3:23)

They sinned doubly, as it says חָטְאָה יְרוּשָׁלַם, “Yerushalayim sinned a sin.”

And they were punished doubly, as it says, כִּי לָקְחָה מִיַּד ה' כָּפָלִים בְּכָל חַטֹּאתֶיהָ, “She received from Hashem's hand doubly for all her sins.”

And the consolation is double, as it says, נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ עַמִּי יֹאמֶר אֱלֹקֵיכֶם, “Be consoled, be consoled, My people,” says Your G-d.” (*Eichah Rabbah* 1:57)

Why is everything double?

It may be compared to two people who are taking leave of one another. One is traveling east, and the other, west. Whatever distance one of

them goes, he is now double that distance from his friend.

This is why the sin was double. *Hashem* says,

### לְעִילּוֹי נִשְׁמָה

מוֹחֵ"ד מִשְׁהָ בֶן אֱלִיעֶזֶר הַמְבוֹרָח זצ"ל

וּמוֹחֵ"ד בְּרוֹךְ זֶאֱבִי בֶן נִתְּלִי קְדָאוֹס זצ"ל

גִּבְתָּה נִבְדִּידָם ~ עֲטַרְת זִקְנִים בְּנֵי בָנִים וְהַפְאֶרֶת בָּנִים אֲבוֹתָם

“If you leave Me a day, I will leave you two days.”<sup>1</sup> This means that for every day a person distances himself from the Torah, the Torah also distances itself from him a day’s travel. So he is now two days’ distance from the Torah.

This is an important principle in how *Hashem* relates to human beings. When a person commits a sin, the resulting destruction is not just the deed he did. It is much more than that. He also distances himself from *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* when he commits a sin. This distance deprives him of *siyata d’Shmaya*. And when a person doesn’t have *siyata d’Shmaya*, he experiences a lot of troubles.

Yesterday, this sinner was hated by Hashem; he was detested and distanced and abhorred. And today, [now that he did *teshuvah*,] he is loved and cherished and close and befriended.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious that the destruction a person causes himself by being distant from *Hashem* is no less than the destruction of the sin itself. So the damage is double.

It’s the same with receiving double punishment. When a person receives a punishment, he naturally suffers doubly from it. For instance, let’s say a person is sick in bed. Besides the suffering of being sick, he also doesn’t go to work, and he loses income. He might lose a large sum due to sickness or through being tied up by some other unpleasant circumstance. It’s all because the sickness was an expression of *Hashem* hiding His face from him, and when that happens, it’s double trouble.

And so it is with the double consolation. When a person does *teshuvah* with all his heart, and *Hashem* turns to him lovingly and affectionately, then besides the consolation he receives for the troubles he went through, he also gains *siyata d’Shmaya* in various areas. Just as sin distances a person from *Hashem*, so *teshuvah* draws him close.<sup>3</sup> And when he is close to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, he enjoys a lot of *siyata d’Shmaya*.

The Rambam writes:

*Teshuvah* is such a great and virtuous thing! Yesterday, this person was separated from *Hashem* the G-d of Yisrael. He cried out and was not answered. He did *mitzvos* and they were shredded in front of him.

Today, he is attached to the *Shechinah*. He cries out and is answered immediately. He does *mitzvos* and they are accepted joyfully and graciously. And not only that, but Heaven longs for his *mitzvos*, as it says, “The offering of Yehudah and Yerushalayim will be sweet to *Hashem* like in old times and in former years.”<sup>4</sup>

So when a person wants to change his ways and do *teshuvah* and attach himself to Torah, and then he sizes himself up and realizes that his goal is beyond his abilities, it is not truly so. Because as soon as he starts to draw closer to *Hashem*, he gets *siyata d’Shmaya*. He has double strength. And the closer he draws himself, the more he gets. He will just go up and up. ●

<sup>1</sup> See Rashi on Devarim 11:13.

<sup>2</sup> Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Hilchos Teshuvah 7:6.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.