



פרשת יתרו-משפטים

How Did You Know Just What I Needed to Hear?

By Rebbetzin Shiffy Friedman

This shiur has been dedicated as a zechus for the ilui neshamah of Haya'el hachashuv Avraham Meir ben yvlch"t Reb Yosef Nesanel, whose yahrzeit is כ"ח שבט, this coming Wednesday. If you can perform a special mitzvah on his yahrzeit, or light a candle, may it be a zechus for the special neshamah of this young child who lit up the world with his Torah and avodah and passed away at age 11 after a very short illness.

Welcome, dear sisters, to this week's shiur!

My apologies that this shiur is appearing later in the week. It's been heartwarming and such a *kiddush Hashem* to witness the *lo ra'av lalechem velo tzama lamayim*, how our fellow Yiddishe sisters are so thirsty and hungry for words of Torah—the phone calls, the emails... I wish I can share all these messages with you so you'll be awed as well, awed by the *mi ka'mcha Yisrael*. The incredible Breindy Erlanger who runs the Inspire By Wire with such devotion is one individual who gets to hear some of it through the messages she receives on the Inspire By Wire line, where women keep asking for the next shiur. What a reliving of the Ko Somar LeBeis Yaakov, which we read of in this week's parshah, where Hashem instructed Moshe Rabeinu, "First go talk to the Bais Yaakov, to these special, special women, whose hearts are wide open, who are just so thirsty for this Torah, for this connection to Me. They will be the first ones to know about what's about to come!" Thank You, Hashem, that I am zocheh to witness the beauty, the sheer holiness, of Klal Yisrael up close... So the shiur is finally here and because I would love to get back to the original Ner Leragli schedule of sharing the shiur

earlier in the week, and each shiur takes an incredible amount of time to prepare and present (way more than I could have envisioned, even if I've been teaching for over 15 years now!), we will focus on both Parshas Yisro and Parshas Mishpatim in this week's class.

"How did you know just what I needed to hear?" That's the most common feedback I've been getting on each of the Ner Leragli shiurim. These messages seem to be resonating with so many of you, and *davka* at the time when you needed to hear it most. How indeed? It's not because I know. It's simply because I'm teaching Torah and in today's class, in our discussion on probably *the* most momentous parshah in all of Chamisha Chumshei Torah, the parshah in which the actual gift of Torah was presented to us, I'm excited to discuss just how healing and wondrous this Torah Hakedosha, the prescription for everything our nefesh—neshama—needs, is.

But first, some feedback.

Still on Parshas Bo, the Moon and Me, I got not one, and not two, but three



magnificent poems reflecting on our relationship with the moon. In one poem, the writer, a Ner LeRagli listener, describes the angst of her tumultuous childhood and how the struggles are impacting her today, how they're turned her into the person of light she has become. All three of them are so beautiful, so radiant.

And the feedback on the Beshalach shiur was also so special. How many of you are connecting to the koach of neginah and shirah, finding it to be such a bridge between the mind and the heart. One woman shared that she's struggling in her marriage, and how she feels buoyed by song, how it connects her to Hashem and to herself. She said she especially enjoys listening to uplifting, joyous tunes and dancing along, and how that enables her to pour her heart out to Hashem in such a real way.

One very special listener who I was so happy to meet in person shared how, in her words, "the shiur on Parshas Beshalach changed my life. I'm used to washing for shalosh seudos, but it was always a wash-and-bentch situation. This week, I turned it into the *ne'ilah* of Shabbos," she shared. She sang the zemiros with her kids, elevating a part of Shabbos that is so often overlooked. She also shared how starting off her day with song, especially when her toddler wakes her at 5 am, has been such a game changer for her. The power of song!

And now, we're ready to look into Parshiyos Yisro and Mishpatim and draw our illuminating lessons from this week's *parshah*.

First, how can Parshas Yisro be a guiding light for me this week?

What's just one message that I can apply to my life so I can feel more of the *Ner Mitzvah veTorah ohr*?

Before we explore any *meforshim* on Parshas Yisro, I believe simply reading and learning the *peshat* of this momentous parshah with adult eyes can do so much for us.

How Moving!

When I read through the *pessukim* around Matan Torah in preparation for this class, I found that I was really moved by the experience. Like with so many parts of the Torah that are ingrained in our memory from when we barely knew ourselves, Matan Torah is really such an awe-inspiring experience that needs to be relearned, re-experienced, in our adulthood. It's not only about sticking the flowers onto the mountain as we did in nursery and kindergarten...

We want to *understand, to feel*: What was it like to be at that ma'amad? What was it like to feel that anticipation? To feel Hashem's overwhelming love and excitement as our Chosson? These were no small matters.

So let's first take a look at the *pashut peshat*, to relive our chasunah, so to speak, and to simply internalize: What did it feel like to be gifted with the *Toras Hashem temimah meshivas nafesh*, a gift that holds all our secrets to wholeness, to healing, to joy and serenity and inner peace?

I encourage you to look into the Chumash and literally just read the *pessukim* this Shabbos, preferably a transliterated Chumash so the words will come to life for you.

ספר שמות, פרק יט



(The *peshat* part of the shiur is only available in audio form.)

Unwrapping the Gift

Where do we begin to unwrap the gift that is Torah? It feels too daunting a task. But let's explore just one angle: How Torah is this wholesome guide for our *nefesh*.

רפאות תהי לשרך ושקוי לעצמותיך
(משלי ג: ח)

What Came First?

We all know that Torah is the blueprint for the world. That's no news for us. We learn it in every *hakdamah* to Chumash class growing up...

אסתכל באורייתא וברא עלמא

(זוהר)

In the sense of Toras Hanistar, the Zohar, this passage conveys that the secrets to how Hashem runs His world are all drawn from Torah.

In a technical sense, we understand it to mean: Hashem looked into the Torah to see how to create His world. He saw, for example, *yehi ohr*, that light should be created, and therefore He created light. He saw the blueprint for the oceans and the seas, the flowers and the trees... Everything was clearly outlined in the Torah and according to these guidelines the world came into being.

But let's understand this a level deeper, in relation to us as the most central part of this magnificent *briah*. How do we and our makeup fit in to this phenomenon? Think about it. It wasn't that we came first, and then came the Torah, but the other way around. In other words, when we find a particular mitzvah burdensome, there has to be some clarity missing there. Why? Because it was only after Hashem wrote the Torah that He created

us—as beings that would fit right in to this narrative. And because He is a *Tov sherotzeh leheitiv*, a Being of complete goodness who only wants to do more good for us, He created us in a way that each of these 613 mitzvos should be directly in sync with who we are at our core.

At the base, the entire purpose of these 613 *mitzvos* is, as the Zohar explains, 613 *aitin*, 613 *eitzos* through which we can connect to Hakadosh Baruch Hu. These mitzvos are the glue. Hashem's ultimate vision of the world was for its inhabitants, its most prized inhabitants—us Yidden—to reach the heights of connection to our Divine source in a very human world. It's through following this detailed manual that we get there, step by step. But this is not just a list of dos and don'ts. Rather, because the Torah came first, Hashem then created us in a way that we should need to plug into these *mitzvos* in order to feel all that connection, all that elevation, all that fulfillment that makes life the magnificent experience He envisioned it to be for us.

For instance, Hashem *kayachol* looked into the Torah and saw, "One of My commandments are that the Yid should observe Shabbos every seventh day." In order to make this mitzvah as pleasant as possible—*lehisaneig al Hashem* is Hashem's goal for us in this world, plus to give us the *sechar*—He fashioned us in a way that our *nefesh needs* Shabbos. After a week of work, we *need* this break, not just a physical break, but a time to recharge spiritually. It's no wonder that when we understand the *mitzvos* properly we see such wisdom and beauty in all of it—because it's just what we needed *because* it came first.



Because Shabbos and *kashrus* and *tznius* and *kibud av va'eim* and every single mitzvah came FIRST, and because Hashem loves us more than we can ever imagine, He fashioned our makeup in a way that these *mitzvos* should synchronize with our needs. There's a mitzvah of Shabbos? I'll create this Yid with a need for rest, a need to BE every seventh day. There's a mitzvah of *kashrus*? I'll create this Yid's body with a need to eat certain foods and abstain from others, that certain foods or insects make this body physically sick. It's part and parcel of who we are. There's a mitzvah of *kibud av va'eim*? I'll create this Yid with a natural desire to be grateful, to want to reciprocate kindness.

Here are some more examples. In His vision for a world of morality and true connection, Hashem established rules and boundaries that would facilitate healthy, wholesome marriages. Once He put those "rules" into place, He fashioned the human being, the person who would keep those boundaries, in a way that we should *need* them in our life, that we should benefit from being in a committed relationship as a husband or wife, that as the wife we should have a need to be the *mekabeil*, the receiver, and as the husband the man should have a need to give, to be in a role of authority. What these *halachos* do for the *nefesh*, how healing they are!

And because these boundaries are *mitzvos*, not only does our *nefesh* get what she's yearning for, but on a *neshamah* level we're also getting *sechar* as well. What a win-win!

As another example, in His vision for a world of positive relationships and

openness, a world whose foundation is *emes*, Hashem relegated *sheker* into the category of *lo sa'aseh*. Stay away from white lies, from exaggeration, from hiding the truth in any shape or form. How did He fashion our *nefesh* as a result? Trust is so critical to us! We feel secure when people talk the truth, when they say what they mean and mean what they say. It's a benefit for all of society. So keeping this mitzvah fits right in to what we need.

Tznius is another powerful example. Because Hashem envisioned a world of boundaries, of purity, of protection, He gave us this mitzvah of safeguarding our beauty. And because He included this gift in the Torah, He instilled in us a natural appreciation for dignity, for privacy, for safeguarding that which is precious for just the right circumstance when we can most tap in to this value. Isn't this gorgeous—that this manual of ours works perfectly in sync with who we are at our core?

If we take a look into the *Sefer Hachinuch* to understand even just *some* of the roots of the *mitzvos*, we simply marvel how each one of them—each one—truly fills a need for the *nefesh*. It's not a list of rules that restrict us from living the best life, only the exact opposite. The Torah is a list of boundaries in order to *encourage* living.

Obligated Either Way

Of course, it's important to remember that even if I don't feel this benefit from Torah and *mitzvos*, I am still 100% obligated to observe all of it. For example, I won't always be able to tap that easily into my *hakaras hatov* and be so easily grateful and gracious toward my parents or

someone else who's done so much for me.

It's also important to mention that one of our mitzvos is to consult with da'as Torah, a gift in its own right for our *nefesh* that seeks authority and clarity. There are times when what seems to be a mitzvah is actually the opposite and vice versa and particular circumstances call for particular applications of the Torah. Regarding this example of *kibud av va'eim*, let's say, there are times when what I think is *kibud av* might be causing more harm than good. Chinuch is another powerful example of that, which again highlights the importance of consulting with da'as Torah for clarity and guidance. We know there is this concept of עת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך

(תהלים קיט: קכו)

As just one example, in the case of the Isha Sota, for the sake of shalom bayis, Hashem was ready to have His name erased only to bring more shalom into the Yiddishe home. So consulting with da'as Torah in regards to grey areas, when we're not sure what's a mitzvah and what's not, is critical.

But, in general, part of Hashem's plan in order to make *bechirah* possible is that the connection between *kiyum hamitzvos* and feeling that "this is right for me," such as when I'm choosing a particular garment over another or refraining from speaking lashon hara, isn't always so clear to us—often due to another powerful force that gets in the way.

He Knows Us Too

Who's this force we speak of?

It's not only Hakadosh Baruch Hu who is intimately acquainted with the needs of our *nefesh*, which he created based on Torah. There's another super-powerful

force that knows us better than we know ourselves. Let's take a look into the powerful words of the Chovos Halevavos to understand just how well this enemy of ours knows us to our core.

בן אדם! ראוי לך לדעת כי השונא הגדול שיש לך בעולם הוא יצרך...

הרבה יסודות גדולים לומדים אנו ממלים מעטות אלה אם רק נתבונן בהם.

השונא הגדול שיש לך בעולם: נצייר לעצמנו את השונאים הגדולים ביותר שקמו נגד עמנו. היצר—גדולה שנאתו שלהם.

ונכנס הוא בנו משלש בחינות:

א. נמסך בכוחות נפשך—כי השקר, הוא מדה וכח הנפש

ב. מעורב בכח רוחך—לוקח חבל בכל ההרגשות ובכל השאיפות.

ג. משתתף בהנהגת חושיך—אין מעשה או תנועה, בין של הגוף ובין של המחשבה שלא יסובבו מסבה שותף בה.

ונוסף על זה הוא מושל:

בסודות נפשך—מתחת לתת הכרה

וצופן חובך—גם במצפון שלך החבוי במעמקי לבך אשר על ידו תכיר חובותיך בעולמך—גם בזה הוא מושל בשליטה גמורה...

ובכל זאת "ואתה ישן לך." אולם הוא תמיד מוכן לקרב: "והוא ער לך."

עיקר כוונתו לאמת השקר, פירוש, להעמיד פנים כאילו השקר הוא האמת... מכל העצות נגד היצר הרע הנשק היעיל הוא "מבט האמת."

(מכתב מאליהו ג: 43-44, חובות הלבבות שער יחוד המעשה, פרק ה')



The yetzer hara, our greatest enemy (more reprehensible than all our enemies combined), is not just a general inclination that hovers over us. As the Chovos Halevavos describes in such detail, he is intimately acquainted with every single part of our functioning: including our emotional ups and downs, our triggers, our thoughts, and even our subconscious mind! He knows just which buttons to press to convince us that what he is offering is just what we need at that moment...

This very powerful *yetzer hara* who keeps playing on our emotions, who keeps drawing us toward the illusion of doing the opposite of what is really good for us, tries with all his might to give us the feeling that in his territory is where happiness—where what we’re seeking—lies. He is the one who convinces us that if we want to feel what our *nefesh* seeks, we’ll find it anywhere but in Torah, anywhere but in the dictates that Hashem set out for us. Want to feel good with yourself? Wear this. Want to enjoy life? Do that. Want to feel noticed? Say that. Want to feel powerful? Take revenge, or boss people around, or bare grudges, or get a “real” education. Want to feel valuable? Do what it takes to feel superior, put these people down, even in your mind, or make sure everyone around you knows just how in demand you or your kids are—it’s for shidduchim, after all. You’re craving connection? Get this app, that device, get in with this crowd. What counterfeit fillers for what we’re really seeking! It’s all counterfeit—looks amazing from the outside, but feels horrible on the inside... and this horrible feeling only leads to us being even more drawn toward more and more illusion because our *nefesh* is all the more hungry.

סיפוק ועונג קיים אינו נותן... ועולמו של היצר אינו אלא דמיון

(עלי שור א: קנג)

The power of illusion is overwhelmingly blinding. And when we’re caught in the clutches of this illusion, which happens at every moment when we’re not on guard, it’s very hard for us to see the truth. The *yetzer hara* has a very creative marketing team working tirelessly for him.

My husband often says that if bamba would be sold by the pound like apples and bananas, chances that the kids would want it are way smaller than when they’re presented in these shiny blue wrappers. It’s all about the marketing, the presentation, the branding. And the *yetzer hara* excels at that. Everything he’s selling us is *dimyon*, fantasy, but he presents it in a way that it just calls our name. What is the number one fantasy? What I am offering to you will fill your *nefesh* in the way that you’re seeking. That’s the number one *sheker*. It couldn’t be further from the truth.

Understanding his workings in this sense—that he knows just how to cater to our *nefesh*, to make what he’s selling so alluring to our emotional needs—we now have a new appreciation for the passuk:

בראתי יצר הרע ובראתי לו תורה תבלין

(קידושין ל:ב)

Tavlin is an herb, which was used for medicinal purposes back in the day. The Torah is literally the medication for everything our *nefesh* needs and everything the *yetzer hara* is trying to sell us in the counterfeit version. He’s convincing us that what’s he’s offering will give us all the good feelings we seek, but it’s all counterfeit. To illustrate with an



analogy that's so simple to understand: The yetzer hara sells us the sugar high, that is inevitably followed by a sugar crash, while the Torah is about that nourishing wholesome meal that fills us in a real way.

The moment we can draw what we really need from Torah and mitzvos, from being connected to our true source, we're healed. We don't need all that fake stuff anymore. We're going for the REAL thing! As I often say when people tell me, "I'm not on the *madreigah* to look for the answers to emotional wellbeing in Torah," I tell them that this is not about *madreigos*, it's about being selective, about being a connoisseur and wanting only THE BEST. You know like when you taste the real thing you can't go for the generic brand anymore? It simply doesn't work because you felt the real pleasure already, the real good taste. That's the Torah for us. It's the source through which we feel true pleasure, true satisfaction, true fulfillment, true serenity and we want nothing else but that. So yes, we don't always feel that the *mitzvos* and *halachos* are a walk in the park. We don't necessarily wake up in the morning driven to follow every single dictate in the Shulchan Aruch. Following them at all times, appreciating them, making the right choices, is certainly an *avodah*—and that's because we're living in this world, the *olam hanistar*, the *olam hasheker*, where the clarity is not stark, in order to make *sechar* possible. But the *metzius* is that if I look out for how each of the *mitzvos* is just what I need, I will see it. And as long as I don't, I'll keep remembering that the misconception is on my end. I'll keep davening to Hashem, "Please, help me feel the beauty in this mitzvah. Help me observe it with joy!"

Like a Lost Sheep

If we dissect every single mitzvah we will find this *emes* at its core: how it fits right in to what we need. As part of the *shiur*, we'll look at one foundational mitzvah from Parshas Yisro, and then at the main theme in Parshas Mishpatim, to drive our point home.

Let's first take a look at the first one of the *dibros*, *Anochi Hashem Elokecha*, which communicates—as the *Sefer Hachinuch* explains in

מצוה כה: האמנה במציאות השם יתברך — the significant mitzvah of *emunah*, faith in Hashem, in His creating and running the world, in the belief that He took us out of *Mitzrayim* and orchestrates every single detail of our life.

Because this mitzvah is central to *Yiddishkeit*, Hashem created us in a way that one of the most central needs of our *nefesh* is to feel taken care of. Think about that little baby, how she craves to be held by Mommy, to be snuggled and swaddled. It's a basic need of the *nefesh*—one that Hashem knows just how much we need it in order to not only survive but to thrive.

As the *Chovos Halevavos* explains in *Sha'ar Habitachon*, because there's the mitzvah of *bitachon*, Hashem inherently implanted this need in our *nefesh*, which we first start out by channeling toward our relationship with our mother, and then our father, until it ultimately leads us toward putting our trust in Hashem. We *need* to feel that there's a Source greater than ourselves to put our trust in. If life feels like one string of coincidences, that's such a disconcerting feeling for us! Hashem gifted us with the mitzvah of *emunah*, and then, in His kindness, He instilled in us a critical need to place our trust in a Higher Power. This mitzvah is



not a burden—the *yetzer hara* will certainly try to convince us that it is, that freedom lies in letting go of all authority—but it’s actually the means through which we feel most freed, most at peace.

What does a Yid’s life look like without *emunah*? We feel like *keseh oveid*, a lost sheep. What a frightening existence! What type of life is that, not to feel that Someone is leading the way for us? In a time of challenge, I feel so alone. And even in a time of joy, we have such a need to be able to express our gratitude, to feel that these gifts we’re being showered with are coming from *somewhere*—Someone is sending them especially for us.

My husband recently returned from a trip to the States, where he went with some other staff members of the yeshivah where he’s rosh yeshivah to meet the parents of his *talmidim* and raise funds. When he returned and we discussed what it was like for him to be there, he kept repeating what an inspiring experience it was for him, especially because he was in the company of the other rosh yeshivah, Rav Greineman shlit”a, who is an unbelievable Yid, someone who puts his avodas Hashem front and center in his life.

In recounting the details of their trip, my husband said to me, “You know, these kinds of trips can really be hard on the person. You end up having a lot of challenging moments, disappointments, it could get exhausting, you feel vulnerable—going from place to place, trying to raise funds.” Such experiences are not necessarily always so comfortable, reaching out to others, waiting to hear back from them, some people being more gracious than others...

“But being there with Rav Greineman, where you get to FEEL *emunah*, not just hear about it in a shiur, it all turns around. You actually feel that you’re taken care of by a Higher Power. It’s not this person who will determine how much the yeshivah will be getting on this trip. It’s Hashem who’s running the show! And if you’re constantly reminded of this *metzius*—the only *metzius*—so much disappointment and frustration simply doesn’t even come up in the first place.” They ended up being able to laugh at the “flops” and really appreciate every positive moment without getting dragged down by the stress of “What will be?” And “We must reach this person!” And “Was this phone call/trip/endeavor worth it?” because being in the presence of someone whose *emunah* is so real, they felt in their bones that they are being led by a Higher Power. That is the gift of *emunah* that literally changes our life around.

When did the Yidden feel this most intensely? At Ma’amad Har Sinai itself. When they heard the words, the powerful reminder that we need at every moment—Anochi Hashem Elokecha—there is no one but Me—being uttered *mipi haDibbur*, from the mouth of Hashem Himself, kavyachol. And, as Rav Dessler and other sefarim explain, every year, when we read about this *ma’amad* in the Torah, we have the potential to re-experience that awakening, that jolting reminder. It breathes fresh life into our nefesh. It makes us come alive again! Indeed, *meshivas nafesh* in its pashut peshat refers to ma’amad Har Sinai, when the Yidden passed out from hearing the dibros from the mouth of Hashem, kavyachol. And it was the words of Torah that brought them back to life. Torah is a



life-giving substance, the prescription for all our needs.

תורת ה' תמימה משיבת נפש עדות
ה' נאמנה מחכימת פתי. פיקודי ה' ישרים
משמחי לב מצות ה' ברה מאירת עינים
(תהלים יט)

What Do I Really Want?

Let's look at a fascinating Sefas Emes that gives us deeper insight into just how the Torah is in sync with what our nefesh needs most of all. Because Hashem's vision for the world was that its inhabitants—the Yidden—should constantly strive to connect to Him through their very human lives, He implanted in our nefesh a deep desire to be drawn toward our Creator. However, as we explained, the yetzer hara will always keep drawing us away from that ratzon. Our natural inclinations keep covering up that deep inner desire. It is through the koach of Torah, the Sefas Emes teaches—by observing it, learning it, delving into it, that we keep coming back to our true essence buried deep inside, to what we really want.

כי הנפש יש בה השתוקקות נפלא אל מי שבראה.

אבל הרצונות הגשמיים מכסים זה הרצון הפנימי של הנפש,

ובני ישראל בכח התורה זוכין למצוא זה הרצון האמת הגנוז בנפש.

וכמו כן כתב "וכל חפציק לא ישוו" (משלי ג', טו) הפירוש:

כי אין האדם זוכה לרצון האמת רק בכח התורה כדכתיב "הנחמדים מזהב" (תהילים י"ט, יא) ונקראת "חמדה גנוזה" (שבת פח ע"ב)

שאין חמדה ותשוקה בעולם כמו התורה,

רק אין זוכין לחמדה הגנוזה רק על ידי רוב היגיעה בתורה.

זה "משיבת נפש" שמחזרת התשוקה והרצון,

שבאמת קודם החטא היה כל תשוקת האדם אל הבורא יתברך, כמו שנותן השכל, שכל פעולה נמשכת אחר הפועל והנברא אחר הבורא.

אך החטא מבדיל ולכן התורה משיבת נפש. פירוש נפש: רצון. כמו "יש את נפשכם" (בראשית כ"ג, ח).

(שפת אמת)

When we see the Torah in this light, the light of *emes*, as the only way to feed our nefesh (which is our *ratzon*) we understand the depth and accuracy of Dovid Hamelech's description—

ונפת צופים:

dripping like honeycombs. It's simply a delicious treat. We feel overjoyed at being the recipients of this gift. We look at ma'amad Har Sinai as the moment when it all came together for us, when life became this majestic experience, when everything just fell into place for us.

A Harmonious World

And now, to drive this point home in regards to Parshas Mishpatim, which is centered around more of the mitzvos Hashem presented to klal Yisrael through Moshe Rabeinu—16 *mitzvos asej*, and 8 *mitzvos lo sa'aseh* to be exact—let's take a peek into the basic theme of the mitzvos there.

How can Parshas Mishpatim be a guiding light for me this/next week?



Most of the mitzvos in Mishpatim, we know, are focused on Bein Adam Lachaveiro.

And in the first mitzvah in Mishpatim, regarding the din of an eved ivri, the Sefer Hachinuch explains the shoresh hamitzvah with words that could bring tears to our eyes, words that communicate the beauty of Torah with such exquisite detail:

שרצה הקל שיהיה עמו ישראל אשר בחר עם
קדוש מלא ומעטר בכל המדות טובות
ומעלות, כי מתוך כך תחול הברכה עליהם...
ועל כן הזהירנו לרחם על אשר הוא תחת
דינו ולגמול לו חסד...
(ספר החינוך, מצוה מב)

It all fits in to this vision of a peaceful, tranquil world! To be kind and caring to others, to treat even those who appear to be on a lower rung in society with utmost sensitivity—the servants, the slaves, the animals (anyone we come into contact with!)—all of it is not only critical to bringing this world toward its *tachlis*, but because this was Hashem’s vision for the world He instilled in us these *middos*. He created us as *rachmanim*, *beishanim*, and *gomlei chassadim*.

(יבמות: עח)

Hashem fashioned us as beings that are right in synch with this narrative—we just need to keep seeing this part in us, tapping in to our essence, and leading our life from this place. By constantly seeing the illusion in the *yetzer hara*’s tactics and opting for the Real Thing, we will *be’ezras Hashem* be *zocheh* to experience this world in the way Hashem envisioned for us—with so much fulfillment, serenity, satisfying, wholesome relationships, and joy.

FIREWORK

Points to Ponder (in your journal):

*Focusing on one mitzvah that I find to be more challenging (*shemiras halashon*, *tznius*, patience [lack of anger], ahavas Yisrael, forgiveness, *emunah*, particular *halachos*), what is the illusion that the *yetzer hara* is offering me that makes observing it fully a struggle? What feeling does he entice me with that I hope to be getting when I go along with his narrative? **And then, what is the reality?** From where can I really satisfy this need that my *nefesh* has? (To divide between the two weeks, you can focus on a mitzvah *bein adam laMakom* during Parshas Yisro, and *bein adam lachaveiro* during Mishpatim; or, an *asei* this week and a *lo sa’aseh* next week.)

Put It Into Practice

*Choose one mitzvah—bonus points if it’s the one you find challenging!—to explore more deeply, to learn of its greatness, to gain more clarity, and to make it a priority this week. Notice how much it’s giving your *nefesh*, what a healing medication it is indeed!

SPARK (*tefillah*/mantra)

ואתם הדבקים בה' אלקיכם חיים כולכם
היום

One of our most important *retzonos* as Yidden is to feel alive, and it is only through our relationship with Hashem—connecting to Him through His Torah—that we can truly feel that.

We can turn this pasuk into a *tefillah* every morning:

“Hashem, please help me feel most alive, most fulfilled, most happy, through my relationship with You.”

“Thank You, Hashem, for giving me the opportunity and the recipe for filling the



needs of my nefesh. I can notice that I have a need and then look toward Torah, toward my relationship with You, and see, 'How can I satisfy this need in a most wholesome, fulfilling way?'"

🎵 SONGS

מתיקות התורה

אם היו בני אדם מרגישין במתיקות ועריבות
טוב התורה היו משתגעים ומתלהטים
אחריה ולא יחשב בעיניהם מלא עולם כסף
וזהב למאומה כי התורה כוללת כל
הטובות שבעולם

(אור החיים על בכל הטוב, דברים כו: יא)

In this powerful commentary, the Ohr Hachaim writes: If people would only feel the sweetness and goodness of Torah, they would “go crazy” and be enthusiastically drawn to her, and an entire world of silver and gold would mean nothing to them, because the Torah includes all the goodness in the world. Such gorgeous words!

Another song that illustrates the beauty of the gift of Torah is the Ner Leragli theme song (option 1 in the Ner Leragli song section).

To listen to these songs, call the LAHAV hotline or visit the LAHAV site.

With Hashem’s help, we should be zocheh to feel the beauty and sweetness of Torah, to feel how the gift of Torah fills us in every way—to feel it in our own bones and to transmit this deep appreciation to all our generations to come...

Enjoy your journey in the light!

please call the LAHAV hotline: (US) 646-693-1700 / (E"Y) 072-370-1938, ext. 2, 4.

To sign up to receive weekly Ner Leragli *shiurim*, or for comments and questions, write to shiurim@lahavinitiative.org.

Take part in spreading inspiring words of Torah to thousands of women around the world! To sponsor a *shiur*, click [here](#). To make a donation to LAHAV, click [here](#).

If you would like to obtain a Ner Leragli notebook with your donation to LAHAV,