

The Weekly Treasure

Weekly Parsha Shiur
of Maran, Rosh HaYeshiva, the righteous Kabbalist
Our Rabbi Benayahu Yissachar Shmueli Shlit"a

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Parashat Pinchas 5786

PINCHAS'S ZEALOTRY AND STRENGTHENING FOR THE DAYS OF BEIN HAMEITZARIM

A parsha without restraints • Life insurance for Moshe • The main part of the army – those who study the Torah • Moshe the commander and Pinchas at the front • Our Master the holy Ohr HaChaim • The wedding of Boaz on the Seventeenth of Tammuz • Chacham Ben Zion zt"l • 24 thousand not from the Children of Israel • "And he took a spear in his hand" • Zimri son of Salu • Pinchas's reward • The special virtue (segulah) of reading the portion • The virtue of the Tamid (daily offering) • Pinchas and Bein HaMeitzarim, Chanoch and Pinchas • "He turned back My wrath" • the hanging baby who was saved • The CEO of "Sony" without an interview • "The city was breached" is the main thing • To attain Hashem during Bein HaMeitzarim, • Days of atonement for the sin of the Calf • Strengthening in guarding holiness

He Did Not Understand the Signals

Behold, we have merited a great merit – the Sabbath Queen, a special Sabbath, the Sabbath of Parshat Balak, and now we are preparing ourselves for Parshat "Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon the priest", which in fact is also the portion of the sacrifices of all the festivals, and contains also the matter that the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moshe: "Take Yehoshua, a man in whom there is spirit, and bestow some of your majesty upon him" – that he will lead the nation of Israel after you.

This week also falls the fast of the **Seventeenth of Tammuz** [on Thursday], and on Tuesday is the day of the passing of **Rabbi Chaim ben Attar** – the holy *Ohr HaChaim*, and on the holy Sabbath day [Parshat Pinchas], the 19th of Tammuz – this is the day of the passing of our teacher and master **Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul**, and we will try to speak about all these things today, with the help of the Almighty and His salvation.

First of all, we saw Parshat Balak, a portion that contains sublime secrets! And behold, in a Torah scroll, **within Parshat Balak** there is no pause, not even one, neither open (*ptuchah*) nor closed (*stuma*), to differentiate between one subject and another subject, **because usually**, in most portions of the Torah, the Holy One, Blessed be He, arranged for Moshe our teacher a space between the portions, to analyze between one portion and another portion. But Bilaam the wicked, with him the whole portion is one time, there are no pauses. **Why is it like this?**

Because he was swept away in the words of his prophecy, without understanding, without knowledge, without a pause to reflect. Analyze! Stand! Think! Do you not see "And Hashem opened the mouth of the donkey"? Such a wondrous wonder that the donkey begins to speak with you, and you are not impressed? Not frightened? Not astonished? And the angel rebukes him: "I came out as an adversary" I came to disrupt you – for your

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own good. The donkey understands and you do not understand?

Bilaam did not analyze, he was busy only with his desire to curse, and this is **a great moral lesson** (mussar) for us, that sometimes the Holy One, Blessed be He, sends a person such clear signals, and he is opaque, he does not notice what is happening with him!

The Gentile Does Not Want to Succeed...

The Mishnah says: Ten things were created on Sabbath eve twilight, and one of them is "the mouth of the donkey". Our master Ovadiah of Bartenura and *Tosafot Yom Tov* say, that the intention is not that Bilaam's donkey prolonged its days so many long years from the creation of the world until Bilaam, but rather that on Sabbath eve twilight it was decreed upon the donkey that it would speak with Bilaam. And into that first donkey, the Holy One, Blessed be He, gave power that the donkey that would come from its power that would be in the time of Bilaam, it would be able to speak.

The Chafetz Chaim says, **when a Jew has a problem** he goes to a Rabbi, requests a blessing from him that **he will succeed. But a gentile, when he has a problem**, what does he do? He requests that that person who is against him – that he should die, that he should go to hell... Thus Balak requests from Bilaam to curse the nation of Israel. He does not request a blessing that he should succeed, he requests that the one against him should go away. This is their approach. They have no intellect to analyze.

It is a wonder how the Holy One, Blessed be He, the Cause of Causes and the Reason of Reasons, arranges matters, and how they want to defile the nation of Israel and what they want does not work.

At the end of Parshat Balak, we saw how the Midianites caused the nation of Israel to sin. Bilaam knew the work, he knew "Their L-rd hates licentiousness". The holy *Zohar* says, that they decorated the daughters of Midian with 24 *zini de-mas'avuta* – twenty-four decorations of types of terrible impurity, which attract hearts. And corresponding to the 24 *zini de-mas'avuta*, we have 24 bridal decorations of the holy *Shechinah* (Divine Presence), which is corresponding to the 24 chapters of (tractate) Shabbat, and corresponding to the 24 books in the Torah that we read on the night of Shavuot, and in this way they subdue these 24 *zini de-mas'avuta*. Bilaam wanted to defile the nation of Israel, this is what he thinks, but the Holy One, Blessed be He, gives to the nation of

Israel in every generation and generation tremendous powers.

He Waived His Life Insurance

Therefore, the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to **Moshe in Parshat Mattot: "Take the vengeance of the Children of Israel from the Midianites, afterwards you shall be gathered to your nation"** – the Holy One, Blessed be He, requested from Moshe that he take the vengeance of Israel from the Midianites – that he fight against Midian, and only afterward he will be gathered to his peoples.

And there is here **a great moral lesson**: For if we analyze, we will see that the Holy One, Blessed be He, actually gave Moshe our teacher life insurance. He has a promise from the Holy One, Blessed be He, that he will not pass away from the world before he takes the vengeance of Israel against Midian. Because, after all, the Holy One, Blessed be He, did not tell him to go out **immediately** to war, and the Holy One, Blessed be He, also told him that **only** after this war he will be gathered to his people, but before the war, he will not pass away from the world.

And if so, Moshe our teacher **could have delayed** the war against Midian, and thus prolonged his days, to be more with Israel, and meanwhile to teach them more and more Torah, to merit them.

And despite this, Moshe does not wait! He goes out to war **immediately! On that same day** it is written: "And Moshe spoke to the people saying, Arm men from among yourselves for the army and let them be against Midian to execute the vengeance of Hashem against Midian". Moshe said: I do not want anything, right now I take the vengeance of the Children of Israel against Midian, because they went and caused the Children of Israel to sin, (*let it not be upon you or me*), with bad deeds, and "Greater is the one who causes him to sin than the one who kills him", and shall I leave them one single moment in the world? Therefore, Moshe hurried to destroy Midian from the world.

Moshe our teacher does not look at himself. He knows how much his life is worth here in the world, and despite this, he does not consider his own life, and when there fell into his portion such a commandment – to fight against those who caused the nation of Israel to sin, he **immediately goes out to war!** Even though he is, as it were, losing his "life insurance"...

This Is How the Israel Defense Forces Are Built

Another great thing that has in it a lesson for generations, we learned from the war of Midian, and thus expounded **Rabbi Yaakov Galinsky before great commanders of the army**: Moshe our teacher drafted 36 thousand soldiers for the war against Midian.

And it is written that he divided them into three parts: 12 thousand – stand at the front and fight, an additional 12 thousand – guard the equipment, 12 thousand – study and pray for their success. Meaning, for every soldier who was at the front, there was a soldier corresponding to him who sits and studies and prays. And **there are some of our Sages** who say, that there were 24 thousand studying! Meaning, **every soldier required 2 soldiers** who study and pray for him.

Rabbi Galinsky said to the army commanders: "Know this, Moshe our teacher drafted also the 12 thousand studying and praying, and it was considered that they are also drafted into the army, because their draft is to sit and study Torah, and what the soldiers receive – these also receive, it is the same budget! Because everyone is drafted into the army, thus was the entire army of Hashem. These go to the front and these sit and study."

Wonder of wonders! This is how they make the order in the army! Because the main thing of the war is the spirituality, not the physicality. And therefore, all the praying ones and all the studying ones are **the Israel Defense Forces!**

Bar Kochba Cut the Branch Upon Which He Sat

In the Midrash **Eichah Rabbati** it is told that at the time of the destruction, when **Hadrian the Emperor** came to conquer Beitar, he placed a siege on the city and surrounded it with a large army; he had thousands of warriors. But inside the city was the army of **Bar Kochba**, which had two hundred thousand "finger-severed" warriors who cut off their own finger, and another two hundred thousand soldiers who uproot a cedar while riding on a horse—a total of four hundred thousand soldiers, and also Bar Kochba himself was a warrior like no other.

In addition, inside the city was also found **Rabbi Elazar HaModa'i**, who was the uncle of Bar Kochba, who was the genius of geniuses, holy of holies, a holy pious man who acts piously with his Creator, and he

would sit in sackcloth and ashes and pray all day long that the city should not fall.

Hadrian made a siege for three and a half years and did not succeed in conquering, and almost despaired and wanted to leave. He said: "**Who can prevail against this Bar Kochba?**" There was there with Hadrian a **certain old Cuthite**, and he said to Hadrian: "I know what to do; not Bar Kochba, and not the soldiers do anything, but rather with the Holy One, Blessed be He, everything depends on spirituality, everything depends on the mouth, on the power of prayer, and these have inside the city an old sage named Elazar HaModa'i, who prays all day long, and if he is killed, everything will be fine, and the city will be conquered, because he holds back everything." **Hadrian said to him**: "How shall we kill him?" The Cuthite said to him: "Let me enter and you will see."

What did that wicked Cuthite do? He entered **through the sewage tunnel** into the city and found Rabbi Elazar HaModa'i praying. The old Cuthite bent down to him and made himself **as if whispering to him**. The people of the place saw the Cuthite "whispering" with Rabbi Elazar and slandered him to Bar Kochba. When Bar Kochba heard this, he was filled with rage and went to his uncle Rabbi Elazar HaModa'i, and although Rabbi Elazar completely denied that he had spoken with the old Cuthite, Bar Kochba gave a kick to Rabbi Elazar and killed him.

A heavenly voice went forth and said to Bar Kochba: "You killed Rabbi Elazar HaModa'i, who was the skilled arm and the right eye of the nation of Israel, therefore your arm shall be cut off and your right eye shall wither." And so it was, and Bar Kochba was killed and the city was captured.

What do we see here? Who is the true guardian? The Torah! The Tzaddik (righteous person)! Not four hundred thousand soldiers, not Bar Kochba. The guardian—it is the Torah; this is the secret of the eternal existence of the nation of Israel. What holds up the entire army and the entire world? It is the one who studies Torah! And this we saw in the war of Midian, that for every soldier there were two who study Torah!

I Am the Commander

Another thing we learned from the war of Midian, a wondrous thing: The Holy One, Blessed be He, says to Moshe Rabbeinu: "Take the vengeance of the children of Israel from the Midianites," and whom does he send? Pinchas. And it needs to be understood: after all, the Holy One, Blessed be He, commanded you, so

why do you send Pinchas? Rather, Moshe said, "True, the Holy One, Blessed be He, commanded me, and therefore I am the commander, but to approach the war against Midian myself? I cannot! Why? Because I grew up in Midian for several years, and there was my marriage match; how shall I return evil for good? I cannot do the war myself? They must be given a blow! But I will not do it, I will give it to Pinchas, who knows how to do it."

"Crazy" About It

Now, if so, we have for us, with the help of Hashem (Blessed be His Name), this coming Tuesday also a special event, for it is the day of the passing of **Rabbi Chaim ben Attar**, and I want to speak today about the special light of Rabbi Chaim ben Attar. His soul ascended to the hidden realms of heaven on the 15th day of Tammuz, 5503 (1743); this comes out to 283 years ago. And his grave is located on the slope of the Mount of Olives, and multitudes of the House of Israel go there for salvation, matchmaking.

And it is written in **the holy books** that the soul of the **Ohr HaChaim** is a spark from the soul of Moshe Rabbeinu and also of Rashbi (Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai), and our rabbis say that when studying the Ohr HaChaim's commentary on the Torah, it is like studying the Holy Zohar.

His composition on the Torah is entirely song and praise on the importance of those who study Torah; how does he write there? "If human beings felt the sweetness and pleasantness of the goodness of the Torah, they would **go crazy** and burn with passion after it." He wanted a person to be enthusiastic about the Torah; this is his testament—that a person should feel and know what the value of Torah is, and indeed he himself would dedicate his life to the Torah in an extraordinary way. And without a vow (Bli Neder) we will speak about him, may Hashem merit us.

Passed Away on His Wedding Day

And also we have afterwards on Thursday the day of the Seventeenth of Tammuz, which we will see soon a few things that occurred on the Seventeenth of Tammuz, and therefore we fast on this day, but the main thing is repentance and weeping. And on this day begin 21 days which are the days of Bein HaMeitzarim (the Three Weeks), and including Tisha B'Av it is 22 days, and the main thing in them is to do a great repentance.

It is known that the Messiah is born on the day of Tisha B'Av, and therefore they sit from noon on chairs,

because he was born and already there is salvation. **And the Chatam Sofer** says that **the wedding of Boaz with Ruth was on the 17th of Tammuz**, because on the 16th of Nisan, Ruth the Moabite with her mother-in-law Naomi returned from the field of Moab, and they waited three months, and then occurred what occurred with Boaz, who said to her "if he will redeem you, good, let him redeem," and then on the seventeenth of Tammuz was the great wedding. And on that very day Boaz brought with her already this son—the soul of the Messiah, and on that same day Boaz passed away.

And if so, the soul of the Messiah came to the world on the seventeenth of Tammuz; it is all the Cause of Causes and Reason of Reasons—these are very, very holy days! And we need to take these things to our hearts.

Arrives Only to Say Mazal Tov...

Also I told you on the Sabbath day, with Hashem's help, the 19th of Tammuz is the date of the passing of our teacher and rabbi, the genius of the world, our master Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul, ZY"A, who was a genius like no other, and his teacher Chacham **Ezra Attia**, who was the rabbi of rabbis, relied on him for everything.

When **Rabbi Silver** arrived, who was a great genius and would ask difficult questions and offer answers, then he did not know what to do, and Chacham Ben Zion said to him, "Honorable Rabbi, do not worry, I will come, I will sit with him and everything will be worked out."

Our teacher said a beautiful thing; he would say about the verse "Behold, the nation shall rise up as a young lion, and lift up himself as a lion," that according to how a person prays and how a person studies, it is possible to discern who is truly connected to the Holy One, Blessed be He, and to the Torah. The Rabbi would say that it is like the guests who come to a wedding: there are those who come only to say Mazal Tov, and there are those who stay a little while and leave, and there are those who stay longer, but the close family—they come from the beginning and stay until the end, because they are connected to the hosts of the celebration (Ba'alei HaSimcha).

And he would say that the same thing, making a distinction, it is to be connected with the Holy One, Blessed be He, to be connected with the Torah, to be connected to the Shechinah (Divine Presence); whoever comes from the beginning of the prayer until

the end of the prayer, or whoever studies all day sitting in the study hall (Beit Midrash)—these are connected to the "hosts of the celebration." There are those who arrive early before the beginning of the prayer and are not in a hurry to leave; these are connected to Hashem, may He be blessed—this is **a beautiful parable** that the Rabbi gave.

No One Wanted to Marry Them

And now with the help of the Almighty and His salvation, we will go to **Parshat Pinchas**: "Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon the priest, has turned My wrath away from the children of Israel, in his being zealous for My jealousy among them," **and it needs to be understood**: how is it possible to say that Pinchas "turned My wrath away from the children of Israel, in his being zealous for My jealousy among them," when after all 24 thousand of the people of Israel already died, meaning that the wrath of the Holy One, Blessed be He, did make an impression upon the children of Israel?

Rather, Rashbi (Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai) **says a wonderful thing in the Holy Zohar**: when the Erev Rav (mixed multitude) converted and came and joined the nation of Israel, no one from the nation of Israel wanted to marry them, but who did marry them? The tribe of Shimon. They were the only ones who agreed to marry the Erev Rav. And so the Erev Rav—they married women from the tribe of Shimon and intermingled with them and begot children from them.

And the Zohar says that these children of the Erev Rav died in the sin of the Golden Calf, and those who remained are the 24 thousand who died in the plague of the daughters of Moab. And according to this, the Zohar says that truly from the actual **children of Israel, not even one died in the plague!** Because in the merit that Israel guarded themselves from intermingling with the Erev Rav—all the holy seed were counted in the tally, and not even one of them was missing. And only the tribe of Shimon died, who gave their daughters to the Erev Rav—woe to him who does not guard his seed properly! Therefore it says "Pinchas the son of Elazar turned My wrath away from **the children of Israel**," not away from the Erev Rav.

Spear and Not a Sword

Another thing **the Zohar says**: "in his being zealous for My jealousy **among them** (בתוכם)." Rashbi says: Pinchas intended the Ineffable Name, snatched the children of Israel from the Angel of Death—"among

them" (מתוכם) are the letters "**from within the Mem**" (מתוך מ). And I will explain this to you: it is written concerning Pinchas "and he took a spear (רומח) in his hand," and it needs to be understood what is this **spear**? Why is it not written sword?

Rather, the Zohar says Pinchas said in his heart: Avraham Avinu (Abraham our forefather) equals 248 (רמ"ח) in Gematria, and in the merit of Avraham Avinu, and also in the merit of the **248** words of the recitation of the Shema, I will go and be victorious and kill them, I will be zealous for the jealousy of Hashem. And this is what we pray "in wrath remember mercy (רחם)"—mercy (רחם) is 248 (in Gematria value).

So the Holy Zohar says: the main evil of the S"M (angel of accusation) is the Mem (מ), and Pinchas saw the letters 'Mem', 'Vav', 'Tet' (which spell out the Hebrew word for death) hovering, wandering over the nation of Israel; he snatched the letter Mem from (the word) "Mavet" (death) and connected it to his own name—Pinchas is the Gematria of Yitzchak and both names equal, 208. Having already 208—he took the (letter) 'Mem' and connected it to himself, and it became 248 (the Gematria value of spear, as spelled in Numbers 25:7). And also the (letter) 'Vav' (ו) of (the word for) death he took, and it became "Romach" (רומח) alternate spelling for spear) with a Vav, namely, a spear in his hand. And he also snatched the letter 'Tav' (ת) of "Mavet" (the final letter spelling out death) and then it became the number 654—(תרנ"ד), like the numerical value of "**a complete chariot**" (מרכבה שלמה) which is like the numerical value of "Avraham Yitzchak Yaakov David"—this is called a complete chariot, and Pinchas said: "By the power of this **complete chariot**, I, with the help of the Almighty and His salvation, will succeed against this Sitra Achra (the other side / evil side)."

Zimri - Shaul Was 250 Years Old

And who was this Zimri son of Salu, prince of the tribe of Shimon? This is "Shaul son of the Canaanite woman" who **was literally the son of Shimon**. And his mother was Dinah, who is called Canaanite because she was in Shechem. And when Shimon and Levi went to Shechem and killed everyone by the edge of the sword, Dinah did not want to leave; she said to them "What shall I do? Who will marry me?" Shimon said to her: "Come marry me, do not worry," and who was born from this? Shaul, who is Zimri. **He was among those seventy souls who went down to Egypt**; he was at the age of 250 years old at that time, he lived long years, a prince of the tribe of Shimon, he was a great righteous man, but what? The evil inclination and Satan danced

there, since the tribe of Shimon took from the Erev Rav, and the prince agreed with them—therefore Satan came and danced.

And Cozbi daughter of Zur is the daughter of Balak, and **Zimri son of Salu** saw that the soul of the Messiah was found with Cozbi, and truly he saw correctly, because with Moab was the soul of the Messiah, but it passed to **Ruth the Moabite**—the granddaughter of Balak, from whom Boaz brought the soul of the Messiah. But in any case, he did not fail for nothing—this is all supreme secrets. And the evil inclination is Satan, he is the accuser.

He took an immense risk

And therefore, in this, Pinchas did a great thing, by being zealous for My jealousy among them, the Torah says: "who was zealous for his L-rd *vayechaper* ויכפר for the children of Israel." **The Yalkut Shimoni asks**, why is it written *vayechaper* (and he will atone) and not *vechiper* (and he atoned)? Rather, says the Yalkut Shimoni, until this day Pinchas has not moved, but stands and atones; wherever there are dead, there are problems, among the nation of Israel, Pinchas comes and stands there and atones for the children of Israel. Therefore we say: "Merciful One, remember for us the merit of Pinchas the zealous."

And Pinchas merited to become a living and enduring angel, and he is Eliyahu the Prophet who will herald the redemption, with Hashem's help, in the future, as it is written: "Behold, I send you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of Hashem ... and he shall turn the heart of the children to the fathers."

And even during his lifetime, Pinchas became an angel. From where do we know this? Because when Pinchas and Caleb went to spy out the land on Yehoshua's mission, it is written that they came to Jericho and were at Rachav's house, and she hid them. And it is written there, *vatitzpeno* (and she hid him) — and the question is asked: why is it written *vatitzpeno* in the singular form, and not *vatitzpenem* (and she hid them) in the plural form? **And our Rabbis say** that Pinchas did not need her to hide him because he was an angel, whom people cannot see! And if so, she only needed to hide Calev (Caleb) son of Yephunneh!

An additional and immense reward Pinchas received at that moment: that he was entering the priesthood, because until then the priesthood was only for Aharon and his sons, and Pinchas was only a Levite, and now, in this merit, he also became a priest, he and all his

descendants, and it is written that all the High Priests were from his descendants. Look what power! And all because he was zealous for the jealousy of Hashem in a way that has no equal in the world.

And one must know that he truly endangered his life, because if he had killed them not exactly as it was [supposed to be], it would have been forbidden, and he would have been liable for death! For it was permitted to kill them specifically at the time they were joined together. Therefore the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: "You were zealous for the jealousy of Hashem and endangered your life? Therefore, **behold, I give him My covenant of peace.**" What a great power!

"I read this every day"

In the parsha of Pinchas, there is the reading of the offerings of all the festivals and holidays. **Rabbi Chaim Palagi**, in his book *Moed LeChol Chai*, writes that there is a great *segulah* (spiritual remedy) in reading the offerings of the festivals to annul judgments, and they are capable of defeating the idolaters. **And this is his phrasing:** "And I, the ignorant one, accustomed myself to read during the time of the *Mincha Gedolah* the portion of the offerings that is in the portion of Pinchas, every day before Mincha, and any man of Israel who has some claim, accusation, trouble, or distress, let him read the portion of the offerings of the portion of Pinchas and he will be saved." The power of this is so great!

And it is written in the portion of the offerings: "The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the second lamb you shall offer in the afternoon." Look what **Rabbi Yaakov Chaviv writes** in *Ein Yaakov*: Shimon ben Pazi says, we find a **great principle in the Torah:** "The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the second lamb you shall offer in the afternoon."

What is the meaning of a great principle in the Torah? Says **the Netivot Shalom**, **this verse speaks about the daily offering** (Korban Tamid), **and this is a great principle in the Torah:** that when a person serves Hashem with **consistency** (temidut) like the daily offering (*called Tamid*), its power is immense, there is nothing higher than it!

What does the matter of festivals have to do with mourning?

And behold, every year, during the "*Bein Hameitzarim* period" (the Three Weeks), we read the portion of Pinchas. *Bein Hameitzerim*, these are the days in which we were commanded to mourn over the destruction of

the Holy Temple, to pray for the exile of the Shechinah (Divine Presence) of our strength, for the building of the Third Temple, for the gathering of the exiles (lit. the outcasts) of His nation Israel, for Messiah the son of David. Every day one must pray regarding the destruction of our Holy Temple, but now, more than the rest of the year. Let a person now take himself in hand, weep over the exile of the Shechinah and over the destruction of the Temple, and there is nothing higher than this.

And why do we read the parsha of Pinchas between the straits? Because in the days when we mourn over the destruction of the Holy Temple, over the troubles, and the decrees, a person is likely to fall into the arms of despair; therefore, there is now the (Torah) portion of the holidays, to ease the sorrow of the nation of Israel, and so that we remember that these days will turn into days of holidays and festivals.

And not only this, for Pinchas the son of Elazar is **Eliyahu the Prophet**, and in the future to come he will herald the redemption! "Behold, I send you Eliyahu the prophet before the coming of the great and awesome day of Hashem." So specifically in these days, we read the portion of Pinchas, because we anticipate and wait every moment for Eliyahu the Prophet, for the complete redemption with the help of Hashem.

And behold, in the word Pinchas (spelled by the letters 'Pei','Yod','Nun','Chet','Samech') all the festivals are hinted at: *Pei* (פ) - Pesach (Passover) and Purim, *Yod* (י) - Yom Kippur on the 10th of Tishrei, *Nun* (נ) - the holiday of Shavuot which is the fiftieth day of the Counting of the Omer, *Chet* (ח) - Chanukah, *Samech* (ס) - Sukkot. This is all the great lights of all the holidays, they are in this portion, and already we see them here, with Hashem's help!

And listen to a wonderful thing: Pinchas is Eliyahu, he is the seventh generation to Yaakov our forefather: **Yaakov, Levi, Kehat, Amram, Aharon, Elazar, and Pinchas is seventh**, the aspect of Shabbat. And likewise, the same thing, **Chanoch** was seventh to Adam the first man: **Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Yared, Chanoch**. And both of them, Chanoch and Pinchas, are the aspect of Shabbat, a semblance of the World to Come! A wonder of wonders.

Pinchas extinguished the sun...

And it is written that after the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moshe, "Take all the chiefs of the people and hang them up before the Hashem against the sun" — all those who worshipped Baal Peor. **And how did**

they know who sinned and who did not sin, who went after the troubles and the licentiousness? How would we know? **Rather, it was like this:** behold, the people of Israel were inside the clouds, and therefore **the sign was clear:** whoever the cloud continued to protect, it was a sign that he was righteous, he did not sin; but whoever the cloud **spat out**, it was a sign that he was problematic.

Therefore He said to him, "and hang them up before Hashem specifically **against the sun**," because those who are under the cloud are not against the sun, for inside the cloud one sees neither sun, nor moon, nor stars, but whoever sinned was spat out from the clouds and he remained outside **against the sun**.

But afterward, in the deed of Pinchas, it is written that the Holy One, Blessed be He, said that Pinchas "**turned back My wrath** (*chamati*)."
What is "**turned back My wrath**"? **Rabbi Yehuda Moalam used to tell us a wonderful explanation for this:** behold, the people of Israel were inside the cloud, and those who sinned with Baal Peor, the cloud spat them out, and they remained standing against the sun (*chama*), and therefore the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to them: "hang them up before Hashem **against the sun**" as we said.

And what did Pinchas do by being zealous for the jealousy of Hashem and preaching to the people of Israel? He **brought them back in repentance**, they all said "we have sinned, we have committed intentional sins, we have rebelled," and then **what happened?** The cloud brought them back inside. Therefore it is written, "he turned back My wrath (*chamati*) from upon the children of Israel" — he turned back the **sun** (*chama*), because the sun now does not rule because they entered inside the cloud. "Turned back My wrath (*chamati*)" — this is literally the sun (*chama*), that Pinchas did not let the sun rule over them!

And also by Pinchas, it is written "he turned back My wrath (*chamati*)."
In the word *chamati* (חמתי) there is the word *chai* (חי - alive) and the word *met* (מת - dead). But the word *met* is written in its proper order, and the word *chai*, its letters are far apart; and Pinchas "turned back My wrath (*chamati*)," meaning he connected the letters of *chai*, distanced death, and brought vitality.

Now these are not simple days, they are days of judgment. And one of the things that saves from judgment is **charity** (*tzedakah*). As is known, charity also distances death and draws near the living, as it is written: "charity delivers from death." And so we saw with the Half-Shekel (*Machatzit HaShekel*) — that in the

word *machatzit* (מחצית), its beginning is *Mem* (מ) and its end is *Tav* (ת) [which spells *met* / dead], and in the middle there are the letters *Chet* (ח), *Tzadi* (צ), *Yod* (י) — *Tzadi* hints at *Tzedakah* (charity) and the letters *Chet* (ח), and *Yod* (י) spell *Chai* (חי / alive), because by means of charity, he remains alive.

And also the word *mavet* (מות - death), if you put the letter *Ayin* (ע) in the middle, it will be *ma'ot* (מעות - money/coins), because by means of **money** [given to charity] they annul death. This is how it goes. The Holy One, Blessed be He, has compassion on His nation Israel, protects us from unusual things, watches over us day and night so that our soul does not go down to Sheol (the pit / Gehonom), and we need great strength so that we will be connected and cleaved to the Holy One, Blessed be He.

He Saw a Baby Hanging on the Sixth Floor

An incident that happened **about thirty years ago**, a certain Charedi family, who had one baby at home named Mordechai. **One day** this child was wandering around the house, and his mother noticed him, and **suddenly** she calls to him "Motti" "Motti" and she does not see him. She went to the balcony and her eyes darkened! She sees hands holding onto the bars from the outside!

And she sees that her child is holding onto the bars from the other side and, Heaven forbid, another moment he is liable to fall six floors! The mother was **very frightened, but she did not have much to do**, because she could not lift him up from there. What did she do? She held his hands while he was hanging outside, and cried to the Holy One, Blessed be He.

Like this she held onto him for two or three hours, and she is crying and praying that someone will notice. Her strength was almost gone... and she says "just a little more and just a little more," and she holds on and holds on. Until someone raised their eyes, and called the rescue forces and they saved them. **After the child was rescued**, they asked this mother: **"How could you hold onto him for so much time?"** But the mother did not understand the question: "What do you mean?! This is my son! I must save my son."

The same thing, the Holy One, Blessed be He, loves us, each one—we are the sons of Hashem. Sometimes a person is at the opening of the abyss, if they fall—they smash to pieces. The accusers come, prosecuting, accusing: "Master of the Universe! He is like this and he is like that, he does not lack iniquities"... But **the**

Holy One, Blessed be He, continues to hold onto us until a person does repentance, and He erases all of these accusers. And the Holy One, Blessed be He, rejoices.

Paid Him So That He Would Prick Him

A person will come and prick his friend with some needle, certainly he will scream at him "What are you doing to me?!", but if it is a doctor that he is looking at, he is ready to pay him a lot of money to prick—just so he will arrange the matters. The same thing, the Holy One, Blessed be He, is our doctor. The Holy One, Blessed be He, arranges all matters for us. That is how it goes. Sometimes a person, Heaven forbid, a certain trouble is decreed upon him, the providence of the Holy One, Blessed be He, everything is from His wide and full hand, and if a certain problem is decreed upon him, what does the Holy One, Blessed be He, do? So that his foot will not strike against a stone, He clears away the stones; sometimes a certain stone remains that needs to be crossed. The Holy One, Blessed be He, passes it over for him through a certain amount of money for charity or through certain things, and everything, with Hashem's help, moves. That is how it goes, the Holy One, Blessed be He, loves us, and everything is Divine providence, and in accordance to how we make an effort—from Heaven they help us.

This Is How the CEO of "Sony" Was Appointed

An incident that happened with a certain G-d-fearing Jew, every day he learns Torah, is meticulous with light commandments as with strict ones, and he worked there for his livelihood as an agent of some company, but it did not go so well for him in livelihood. One day his friend said to him: "Listen, I suggest to you, go to New York, try your luck there," and the agent says to him: "I don't know anything, what will I do there?" But this friend said to him: "Travel! I suggest to you!"

Having no choice, this Jewish agent bought a plane ticket and traveled to New York. On the flight, a certain Japanese gentile sat next to him, who looked very respectable, and the whole flight this gentile is eating... what smells... and this Jew is eating nothing, and the Japanese gentile was polite, and said to the flight attendant "Bring him a portion..." but the Jew said: "No, I do not eat," the gentile did not understand, "You have already been here 12 hours, eat!", the Jew said to him: "We Jews must eat kosher, and this is not kosher," and the gentile says to him: "But no one here sees, everyone here are gentiles, eat, it is good

and tasty food...", the Jew said to him: "No!! I am with the Holy One, Blessed be He, I will not eat under any circumstances! I will eat a little of what I can, but you eat, may it be to your appetite, rejoice in your food, **for you, it is the Badatz [high kosher certification] what you eat...** you are not obligated."

They talked a bit like that about business and the flight ended. **Before they parted**, this Japanese gentile said to the Jew: "Listen, I have a big company, take my phone number, and if you need anything, call me."

The agent wandered around New York, tried a few companies there and it did not go well for him, he was despondent, he wanted to travel back. Before he returned, he remembered the Japanese gentile, called him, and told him that it was not going well for him in business.

The Japanese man says to him: "**Come to the 'Sony' company, I want to meet you.**" He arrived there, what luxury, he arrived at the office and he sees this Japanese man, who says to him: "Look, I am the owner of the 'Sony' company, and I was very impressed by you that you are an authentic and honest person, and I want you to manage all of Sony for me in all places, in the USA, in Jerusalem, I rely on you, even though you don't have degrees and such, but your honesty and your truth will lead you." And so it became for him. When a person walks in the way of Hashem, from Heaven they arrange all matters for him. Do you understand? It all goes beautifully.

The Charity Gabbai Became the Joke of the Day

Rabbi Sholom Schwadron used to tell, that once **the authorities in Poland wanted to move a Jewish cemetery**, and everything the Jews did to cancel it did not succeed. But what? They did it together with the Chevra Kadisha [burial society], and like this they would move grave by grave. And behold, they arrived at a certain grave and they see that the deceased is dressed in shrouds, and over his shrouds there is the clothing of a priest... and the body is completely whole.

And the matter became a wonder, who is that righteous deceased person and why is he buried in a priest's clothes? They searched the ledgers of the Chevra Kadisha, and discovered the story of the body: This Jew was buried 100 years ago, he was a simple Jew, a charity Gabbai [collector] who was engaged in collecting money for bringing a bride to marriage [Hachnasat Kallah].

One day an orphaned bride came to him, says to him:

"I am in a problem, there is no one to care for me, there is no money." He had already collected money for two brides. He said to her: "Right now I cannot, the treasury has nothing in it, I borrowed money, I did everything with self-sacrifice." And she is crying, because the groom is not willing to marry, he wants 300 rubles, that is a lot of money, she says "I have nowhere to bring it from." He says to the groom: "Marry, I promise them to you." The groom says: "No! No 300 rubles—no wedding." She is crying, an orphaned bride, and he has nowhere to give from, what did he do? Immediately he went, searched and searched, collected and collected money until he succeeded in raising 150 rubles. He says, "Come take 150 rubles." But the groom stands his ground: "Only 300."

He went to a certain tailor, who was known as a **number one miser...** He said to him: "**Lend me 150 rubles**, I will collect money, I will return it to you." He says: "No, there are no loans, there is nothing," and he [the Gabbai] cries before him: "Listen, this is an orphaned bride."

After a few minutes this tailor responded and said: "You know what, I want one thing, **I want a show...** What show? I have here the clothing of a priest, go wear the clothing of a priest and wander around the whole city one whole day from morning until evening to collect money with it. There will be laughter in the whole city, and then I am ready to give to you." He says to him: "What will come out of it for you?" He says: "That's what I want, I will give you 150 rubles."

The righteous Gabbai did not think twice, dressed in the morning in the priest's clothes, and all the children laughed and ran after him: "Yankee, what did you do? What is this? What are you doing? Are you a priest?" And he became the joke of the day, and like this he collects money. **At the end of the day he came to the tailor**, and the tailor gave him the 150 rubles. Now the bride can get married.

In his will, this Gabbai wrote: "I had such shames, with the priest's clothes, therefore I want them to bury me with these clothes so that they will be righteous advocates for me, that with this I saved the family of these orphans!" What merit he has, what an awesome power!

A Fast on the 9th of Tammuz?

Now we are at the opening of the days of "Bein HaMeitzarim" [The Three Weeks], which are not simple days, and the first day in Bein HaMeitzarim is the 17th of Tammuz. **The Mishnah in Taanit** says,

five things occurred to our forefathers on the 17th of Tammuz: **The Tablets were broken, the daily offering ceased, the [wall of the] city was breached, and Apostomus burned the Torah, and they placed an idol in the Sanctuary.**

And the Gemara says that in the First Temple, the city was breached on the 9th of Tammuz, but in the destruction of the Second Temple, it was breached on the 17th of Tammuz. And **therefore, in the 70 years of exile** that followed the destruction of the First Temple, the nation of Israel **fasted on the ninth of Tammuz**, since in the first destruction the city was breached on the 9th of Tammuz. And after the Second Temple was built they did not fast, because the Holy Temple was built. And after the destruction of the Second Temple, they fast on the 17th of Tammuz, because in the destruction of the Second Temple the city was breached on the 17th of Tammuz.

And there is a big question here that our Rabbis ask: Why did they fast on the 9th of Tammuz? Behold, on the 17th of Tammuz **four additional things** occurred besides that the city was breached—the Tablets were broken, and the daily offering ceased, and the burning of the Torah, and an idol was placed in the Sanctuary—and they certainly were on the 17th of Tammuz. If so, already by virtue of these matters, the fast should have been on the 17th, and why did they only hold on to "the city was breached," as that which determines the day of the fast?

Rather, our Rabbis say, that we see here a **great principle**: that "the city was breached" is the root of the destruction and the root of all the problems and the calamity. What is the meaning? The beginning of the destruction and the exile was that they breached **the walls of Halacha [Jewish Law], the walls of modesty, the walls of Shabbat, the walls of kosher, the walls of purity**, and the moment they breach the wall, a great trouble comes, Heaven forbid, and it turns out that the breaching of the city is the beginning of the calamity. **It is forbidden to break a fence!**

As they said: "Greeks gathered against me **and breached the walls of my towers**"—this is the great wickedness! They entered with their impurity into the Temple Courtyard, they defiled the stones of the Altar, but "breached the walls of my towers"—this is the main thing!

Who Will Stop the Deterioration?

It is written in Eicha (Lamentations): "**Her uncleanness is in her skirts [hems]**," what is "her uncleanness is

in her skirts"? Everything starts from the edges. For example, a person who buys a beautiful garment, with the best design, and the most beautiful, and the seller says to him: "Take this to a tailor, let him put a stitch around the garment so that it won't unravel, because if you don't put the stitching, everything will unravel, it won't hold."

This person did not take it to heart to provide the stitching, and after about two or three months it began to unravel, becoming threads. He came to the seller and said to him, "What is this?" The seller said to him: "But I told you to sew the edges." **This is the meaning** of "her uncleanness is in her skirts [hems]" — if you do not place fences [safeguards] and do not sew the edges, everything goes to ruin. One must pay attention not to breach the walls, because that is the great deterioration; when a person breaches a small breach, afterward he deteriorates, and who will stop the deterioration?

"I Will Jump From the Roof Only Two Floors"...

Our Sages say: One who breaches the fences of Judaism — to what is he compared? To someone who stood on the roof of a large building of one hundred floors, and he is about to **jump from the roof**. He begins to climb the railing. They say to him: "Hey, what are you doing?" He said: "I am jumping down." They said to him: "But you will be paste, you will be a 'kvetch' [squished], do you know what that is, nothing will be left of you?!" He says to them: "No, **I am only jumping two floors**, is it possible to jump two floors?"

This is like someone who says: "I want an 'Apion' [iPhone], but **nothing will happen to me**," but you are breaching the fences! When you step out from the boundary of the roof, you will not reach where you want, do you understand? **They are wise in their own eyes**. They do not know that "she has cast down many as corpses," let it not be upon you or me, woe and alas what could happen. What problems there could be; now is the time that **a person should put on brakes**.

Attaining Hashem

How did our Sages say: "All her pursuers overtook her between the straits [*Bein HaMeitzarim*]." Anyone who pursues Hashem can attain the Holy One, Blessed be He, during *Bein HaMeitzarim*. What is the meaning? "I am with him in distress" — **now the Holy One, Blessed be He, descends to us**, it is possible to get closer to the Holy One, Blessed be He, more. The nation of Israel has a self-sacrifice like no other. One must know this. **We have the strengths** of our forefathers that they

ingrained in us, which are unique of their kind; **there are no such strengths in the world.** The nation of Israel is endowed with tremendous forces that have no substitute, there are none like them.

The Jew is Measured in 'Bein HaMeitzarim'

Another explanation, if you want to understand **what the nation of Israel is.** Every creature on earth, every human being, if it is good for him — he is happy. The Holy One, Blessed be He, gave him houses, vineyards, fields, gives him a license, a **Volvo [luxury car]**, a wife, children, a house, gardens, orchards, why shouldn't I say every day: 'Thank you very much Master of the Universe, praise to Hashem for He is good, everything is good for me now'... Certainly a person **will rejoice and praise Hashem, Blessed be He.**

But when there are a few problems, then the Jew — even when there are problems, he always **cries out to Hashem, Blessed be He;** he knows that the Holy One, Blessed be He, is exacting with us, is with us, and He wants our benefit, the Holy One, Blessed be He, does not just give without purpose, it is all from Him, Blessed be He. All the problems that exist — it is all vanity of vanities. The main thing is that a person should have spirituality.

But a gentile, if it is slightly bad for him — **he kicks,** he curses his god. A gentile. That's how it goes. And this is: "All her pursuers" — you want to check what the People of Israel are, where will you find [overtake] them — between the straits (*Bein HaMeitzarim*), when they are in distress, you will see that they still **hold onto the Torah and faith,** with calmness and tranquility connected to Hashem, Blessed be He. The nation of Israel going in the way of Hashem. **This is a wonder of wonders.**

A Key to Redemption

The days of *Bein HaMeitzarim* — these days are **a key to the redemption.** What is the meaning? We have 22 days, out of which 21 days are without Tisha B'Av, which corresponds to the name *Ekyek* 'Aleph', 'Hei', 'Yod', 'Hei' — the world of Binah [understanding], the world of Teshuvah [repentance]; we do Teshuvah and succeed greatly. And corresponding to these 21 days, there are 21 days **from Rosh Hashanah until Shemini Atzeret,** until Simchat Torah. This corresponds to that. Whoever prepares vessels now can afterward receive **abundance and great illumination** during those days. And in the future — "Rejoice with her in joy, all

who mourn for her" — the 17th of Tammuz **will be a first holiday,** afterward will be Chol HaMoed [the intermediate days], and afterward Tisha B'Av will be the final holiday, and everything will turn into a festival. Now, in the state we are in — **one must worry intensely over the exile of the Shechinah** [Divine Presence], how to truly turn it into a festival?

There are 22 days from the 17th of Tammuz until Tisha B'Av, which contain — **528 hours.** Do the math: every day is 24 hours, times 22 — 528 hours. It turns out that these days **equal the numerical value [gematria] of Maphteach** [מפתח - key] — *Maphteach* hours, and the number of chapters that exist in all **Six Orders of the Mishnah** — 528 chapters. And lo, *Mishnah* [משנה] has **the same letters as Neshamah** [נשמה - soul], for through the Mishnah one merits a soul. And through the study of the Mishnah, the exiles are gathered. And *Mishnah* [משנה] — contains the same letters as the initials in the phrase of: *He'elita Min She'ol Nafshi* [You raised my soul from the underworld].

But there are **three Shabbatot (Sabbaths)** during the days of *Bein HaMeitzarim*, each Shabbat is 24 hours, and three times 24 — **seventy-two** hours, and there is also the day of Rosh Chodesh on which we do not mourn — how much does it become? **96 hours.** And there are another 6 hours of "He called a festival against me," on the day of Tisha B'Av **in the afternoon,** when during these six hours it already turns into a festival, how much does it become — 102 hours. Subtract 102 hours from *Maphteach* [528] hours — it becomes 426 hours. This is the gematria of: *Toch* [תוך - inside/midst]. "Behold, I am going out into the **midst** [*toch*] of Egypt," Egypt [Mitzrayim] — straits [Meitzarim]. I go out into the midst of the days of *Bein HaMeitzarim*, in which I am with the **nation of Israel.**

Days of Atonement for the Sin of the (Golden) Calf

Now, in the month of Tammuz from this Thursday, the 17th of Tammuz, until the end of the month, the 29th, **there are thirteen days;** afterward there are until the 9th of Av in the month of Av — that is another nine days. Our master the Arizal says: the 13 days of Tammuz — they correspond **to the 13 Attributes of Mercy,** "Almighty, merciful and gracious," etc., because they atone for what the nation of Israel did that they **made the Calf,** after the Holy One, Blessed be He, took us out of Egypt, split the sea for us, gave us the Torah, woe and alas — they made a calf, and these 13 days atone for this. **Therefore we suffer these 13**

days. And another 9 days — this corresponds to **the sin of the Spies**.

Now see a **wondrous thing**. We said that the entire essence of the troubles is *Toch* [תוך] hours, 426 hours. And lo, a calf ['Egel', עגל] was made; how much does *Egel* equal (in Gematria)? 103. Now, set aside the calculation of the Calf. How much does *Meraglim* [מרגלים - spies] equal? 'Mem' & 'Resh' (the first 2 letters of *Meraglim*) is 240, 'Gimmel' (adds 3) so we are at 243, 'Lamed'-'Yod'-'Mem' (the last 3 letters of *Meraglim*) — 'Lamed'-'Yod' together are 40 plus *Mem* (in *Gematria* is another) 40 — an exact total of 323. Now take also the 103 of the Calf, how much does it become — 426. *Toch*. Exactly these 426 hours. Therefore, now is **the time of redemption**, "Open for Me an opening like the eye of a needle and I will open for you an opening — *Maphteach* [a key] like the entrance of a hall (of the Temple Sanctuary)." One must [try] with all their strength.

The Mouth, the Ear, and the Eyes

Now on these Shabbatot (Sabbaths), we have **three Shabbatot**; which hint to us to guard and strengthen ourselves in three things. The first thing — "The **words** of Yirmiyahu," this is the **mouth**, to hint that one must **guard the mouth** with all our strength, as Yirmiyahu said "Behold, I do not know how to speak," guarding the mouth is not simple. It is difficult. Sometimes a person has a desire to open the mouth, **but according to the pain is the reward**, according to the speech of the human being, either pain or reward. Sometimes there is great pain from speaking too much, but also a great reward — **if he speaks words of Torah**, all the labor of man is for his mouth. This is the first Haftarah of the week.

A week after that, they read the Haftarah "**Hear** the word of Hashem" — **to hear**. Not to hear the humiliation of Torah scholars. You know what happened with **Rabbi Chaim ben Attar**, that he would distribute meat every Friday afternoon [Erev Shabbat] to Torah scholars. And there was one Erev Shabbat where there was no meat at all in the market, there were no oxen, there was nothing, and he obtained one calf, slaughtered it, and took its meat — **only for the Torah scholars of the Yeshiva**.

The Ohr HaChaim Beyond the Sambatyon River

A certain **rich man, a millionaire**, came and said to him: "Listen, I give money all the time, give me about two kilos or something." He said to him: "No, this is

only for Torah scholars." Alas, he (the millionaire) **began to demean a certain Torah scholar**, [but] the holy Ohr HaChaim did not answer him. They told him from Heaven: "You did not answer him—this is not simple, **you must go into exile**, and until you hear yourself being demeaned, it will not be atoned for you." What could he do, he accepted the judgment upon himself with love. He took the backpack, and took his staff in his hand, and began to walk. It was during the (week of the reading of the) **Parsha of Bechukotai**, he rested in a certain place, a **certain eagle** came while he was sleeping, lifted him up and took him to where the **Sambatyon River** is, where the Children of Moses are located, banged him down there, and he woke up, and behold he finds himself in a certain place, saying: "Today is the eve of Shabbat, how will I make Shabbat? **Where am I located?**"

Suddenly, he hears someone **chopping wood for the honor of the holy Shabbat**, he asks him: "Who are you? Are you a Jew?" He saw Rabbi Chaim ben Attar who has a *tallit katan* (tzitzit garment), saw the holy covenant [of circumcision], he said: "Come, I will take you and cross you over the Sambatyon River, **I know how to cross it**, and we will make Shabbat with us, here it is the Children of Moses." The Ohr HaChaim agreed, and the other took him there, brought him and **everyone rejoiced in him**, they did not believe seeing a man from Jerusalem, "How did you arrive? Why did you arrive?" "We will speak afterward."

Gehenom Did Not Open...

They brought him to the Rabbi, **the Rabbi was a very, very holy man**, a righteous person like no other, he would tell them during the meal **certain words of Torah that have no equal in the world**. He said to them: "Today I performed an elevation of the soul during the meal, I was asleep, they told me: **There is a great Rabbi today from Jerusalem** called Rabbi Chaim ben Attar, who explained 42 interpretations on the verse "If you walk in My statutes" (*Im Bechukotai Telechu*), now I will tell you 13 interpretations." And thus he praises him, the Ohr HaChaim asks him: "**Who is this Chaim ben Attar?** Listen, how do you utter his name like that?" "**This is a man like no other in the world**, woe to you if one more time you do not honor [him], **I will give you a punishment**." And thus he tells them the novel insights of Rabbi Chaim ben Attar, everyone rejoices and sings.

In the morning they go to pray, return from the prayer, study, and once again the Rabbi performs an elevation of the soul, and says: "I brought you another

13 interpretations from the soul, I heard them being said in Heaven." And once again [the Ohr HaChaim] says to him: "Who is this Chaim ben Attar?" He says: "**You again?** Put him in the storage room, lock him up until we see on Saturday night what to do with him."

During the third meal, they brought him something to eat, and the Rabbi performs an elevation of the soul—but **it does not go well for him**. They wait, they wait, Saturday night already arrived, the evening service arrived, and suddenly they see spirits, a certain angel arrives **entirely full of eyes**, he says to him: "What do you want here?" He says: "I cannot open Gehenom, as long as Rabbi Chaim ben Attar has not said 'Bless Hashem who is blessed' (*Barechu*)."
He says: "Where is Rabbi Chaim ben Attar? Go to him, **he is in Jerusalem**." The angel says to him: "No, **you put him in the storage room**." "What? I did not know that he was Rabbi Chaim ben Attar." He [the Ohr HaChaim] heard the demeaning things they demeaned him with, he said: "**This is my rectification (Tikun)**." They took him out and honored him with great honor, and afterward they brought him. And then they understood that this was Rabbi Chaim ben Attar, a wonder of wonders.

A Letter to the Holy Shechinah

Mighty things happened with him. When the Gaon Chida (Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai) ascended to the Land of Israel, he accepted upon himself not to speak. The Gaon Chida **wanted to be like a simple man**. He came to Rabbi Chaim ben Attar, [who] said to him: "**I will write you a note to the holy Shechinah (Divine Presence)**, put it in the Kotel, and you will manage, just do not forget." He said to him: "Okay." He ascended to the Land of Israel, but he has nothing to eat, and so a week, two weeks, three. One day he arranges his things, suddenly he sees the **note of Rabbi Chaim ben Attar**, for three days he walked, **he put the note in the Kotel**. After that, he only entered the house of study, **they give him great honor**. "Who are you? Where are you? When did you come?" And so they placed him **as a head and leader over them**. And there in the note he wrote: "To the honor of the Shechinah of our strength," and he used **to worry much over** the pain of the Shechinah.

A third thing, "**The Vision (Chazon)** of Yishayahu (Isaiah)"—this is the eyes. One must guard the eyes very, very much. There was a certain blind man, he called his children and said to them: "I want to tell you a **will (testament)**," this was before he passed away. He took out a ring, he said: "I see all of you, **I am not blind**, but I did not want to sell my eyes, my testament

is, that you strengthen yourselves and exert yourselves to guard the eyes."

A Young Scholar from 'Porat Yosef' Arrived to Me...

There is much to speak about Rabbi Chaim ben Attar, but I also wanted to tell you about our teacher and rabbi, **Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul**, a few short words. He was our **teacher** in the Porat Yosef Yeshiva, something unusual in the world, we merited to suckle Torah from him. And I know that **Rabbi Meir Abuchatzzeira** used to appreciate him in an unusual way. He said: "There was **a certain genius** with me, they call him Ben Zion." They said to him: "**This is our teacher and rabbi, the giant of the generation**." The Rabbi said: "He said to me '**I am a young scholar** from Porat Yosef,' but he asked me questions **that no one in the world** asked me, and also he answered me answers, and I saw that this is a genius like no other."

No One Answered Me Like This Boy...

So, with Hashem's help, the day of his passing is on **this Shabbat**. How much he would cry over the **pain of the Shechinah**. He and Chacham Ovadia were two great friends. Chacham Ovadia, his wife went to the rabbinical court and complained that all the time he **cries over the Shechinah**, they were all the time crying over the pain of the Shechinah, something unusual.

Rabbi David Batzri told us, that one of the days, **the Gaon Rabbi Eliezer Silver**, who was the rabbi of Cincinnati in Ohio and was the president of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the US and Canada, arrived to conduct a visit at the Porat Yosef Yeshiva in the Old City. He was an immense genius, and he used to raise funds for the entire Vaad HaYeshivot (Yeshiva Committee). When they told **Chacham Ezra Attiya** that he was coming, he was under pressure, everyone was excited by him, Chacham Ovadia was not in the area, and Rabbi Ben Zion saw the Rabbi suffering much, he said to him: "Honored Rabbi, **everything will work out**, I will come." And so he asked certain mighty difficulties, and Chacham Ben Zion in humility, explains everything to him. And so for about 20 minutes, he was answering him point by point.

The Rabbi said to Rabbi Ezra Attiya: "Listen, I want to tell you, **no one in the world** answered me like the students here in your Yeshiva, I have been to **world Torah giants like no other**, I would ask them questions, but no one knew how to answer me. Sometimes it takes half an hour or an hour to think, just to answer me, but your students explained to me so beautifully **that**

there is no question at all, they laid out the matters to me so much, I have not seen such a thing."

And Chacham Ben Zion, **he was a great humble person**, he never wanted to speak. You know that **the words of the Rashash in Nahar Shalom** are very deep, and he would say, that the study of the Rashash, when he studies it, **all the hairs can fall out** from excitement.

His brother-in-law **Rabbi Reuven Sharabani**, A"H, would say: "**His character traits—there are none who have similar traits**, he always used to perform a brit milah (circumcision), here too by us for my son—he performed a brit milah, everything with **spiritual intentions** (kavanot), if there was any problem—he always gives us mighty ethical teachings (*mussar*), his words were mighty like no other. **Woe for those who are lost and are not found.**"

Four Legs of Twins

Once a woman came to him, exactly now we studied this in the Gemara, she tells him that she is pregnant, and the doctors told her that **she has a child with 4 legs**. He says to her: "You have twins, they are not looking well, you have two." And so it was, they see 4 legs—but **it is twins**, it was something unusual in the world, **what would come out of his mouth—so it**

was. From the power of the toil of the Torah, may their merit protect us and you and all of Israel our brothers.

I wanted many more things today, also the **Zohar of the days of Bein HaMeitzarim (the Three Weeks)** we did not do, you read the pages very well, the hour is late, and I need to be in another place, therefore forgive me.

May He who blessed our holy forefathers, He shall bless all the holy congregation, may the King of the universe bless you and merit you, especially those who listen to us via satellite, via Radio Moreshet, Radio Darom, and those who study in the leaflet. May the King of the universe bless you and merit you, with firm health and superior light, and a good and long life, in these days—from the 17th of Tammuz it is a fast, **one needs to do repentance** and good deeds, every day at noon **to cry** over the destruction of the Holy Temple. One o'clock in the afternoon, to sit on the floor and cry over the destruction of our Holy Temple, on Friday no, and on Shabbat no, but every single day this is needed. And whoever does this **at midnight**, to do *Tikun Chatzot* (the Midnight Rectification), to cry over the destruction of the Holy Temple. To do everything possible **to raise the Shechinah from the dust**. May Hashem merit us to serve Him and to fear Him.

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מבצעי שבוע הספר
על כל ספרי הישיבה ועוד

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"מצוות רבני מכון בני יששכר
והפועל תדיר להצלחתו
הרה"ג ישראל יעקב רווח שליט"א
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לרגל הכנס בנו היקר
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לעול תורה ומצוות
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