



The Weekly Parsha Shiur of Maran, Rosh HaYeshiva, the righteous Kabbalist,

Our Rabbi Benayahu Yissachar Shmueli Shlit"a

Parsha of Devarim 5786 (2026)

The Essence of the Book of Deuteronomy (Devarim) and the Severity of Care in Matters Between Man and His Fellow

◇ Shabbat Mevarchin, Av, ◇ Completion of the Book of Numbers ◇ The Day of Passing of Aharon, ◇ The Hillula of Our Master the Ari - The Father of the Fathers of Kabbalists ◇ The 42 Journeys and the Secrets Within Them, ◇ The Book of Deuteronomy - Essence and Allusions ◇ The Correct Way of Reproof ◇ The Connection Between the Book of Deuteronomy and the Three Weeks (Bein HaMeitzarim), ◇ To Be Careful Not to Hurt, ◇ "The Sending of the Mice" ◇ Caution with Every Penny of Theft ◇ The Memorial Day for Rabbi Elyashiv ◇ Groundless Hatred, ◇ Kamtza and Bar Kamtza, ◇ The Primary Categories of Damages That Caused the Destruction, ◇ The Virtue of Concession (Waiving One's Rights).

The Entire Shabbat is a "Seudah Shlishit" (Third Meal)

Behold, we have merited a wonderful Shabbat, a special Shabbat - "Shabbat Mevarchin" (the Shabbat of blessing the new month) of **the month of Av** - the Shabbat of Parshat "Mattot-Massei". And we completed the Book of Numbers (Bamidbar), and it turns out that we have already completed four books - "Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers". And now we are beginning the fifth book - the Book of Deuteronomy (Devarim), which is called "Mishneh Torah. **The Vilna Gaon** says that the Book of Deuteronomy, Moshe our teacher heard it from the Holy One, Blessed be He, and spoke

it, but [in] all four books, the Divine Presence (Shechinah) was speaking from the throat of Moshe.

And also this Shabbat we merited to read the Haftarah: "**Hear the word of Hashem**" - the Haftarah of the **second Shabbat** of the Three Weeks (Bein HaMeitzarim). And now, in the upcoming Shabbat, we will read the Haftarah of "**The Vision of Yishayahu (Isaiah) son of Amotz**," which is **the highest and most special** of them all. These Shabbats of the "days of Bein HaMeitzarim" are very important; the entire Shabbat is like "Ra'ava d'Ra'avin" (the Will of Wills) of the Mincha hour of Shabbat—that is how precious and beloved they are, and the prayer and salvation within them is great.

No One Believed That the Angel Could Overpower Him

And this week, on the Rosh Chodesh (New Moon) of Av, it is also the day of **passing of Aharon the Priest** - "a lover of peace and a pursuer of peace, a lover of people (lit. creatures) and brings them close to the Torah." How great a merit this is! The date of the passing of Aharon the Priest is explicitly stated in the Torah in **Parshat Massei**, which we read this Shabbat: "And Aharon the priest went up to Mount Hor at the command of Hashem, and died there... **in the fifth month, on the first of the month.**"

And it is also explicitly stated in the Torah in Parshat Chukat, **the entire event of Aharon's passing**: how Moshe our teacher went up with him to Mount Hor, and that the Holy One, Blessed be He, told him to remove the clothes and dress his son Elazar in them in his place, so that he would minister as High Priest in his stead. And the Holy One, Blessed be He, brought out the bed of Aharon so that all the people of Israel would see that he had passed away, because the people of Israel did not believe that the Angel of Death could rule over him.

And then, "And all the house of Israel wept for Aharon thirty days" - the men and the women, **because everyone loved Aharon**, who would make love and brotherhood. And if the people of Israel had known that he was going up to Mount Hor to return his soul, no one would have let him go up—there is no such thing! And the day of Aharon's passing falls exactly in these days - the days of Bein HaMeitzarim - in which we need love and brotherhood, peace and fellowship between man and his fellow.

Also, we have on Sunday of next week - the 5th of Av - **the day of passing of our Master the Ari**, the father of the fathers of the Kabbalists, and we are preparing ourselves for this day. **We will try to travel to our Master the Ari, but not on Sunday—the day of the Hillula—because if we travel on Sunday, we will not manage to return in time for the Torah lesson. Therefore, without a vow, we will go up to the Rabbi, the Ari, already on Thursday, may Hashem merit us.** And with the help of Hashem, we will speak today about all these things.

The Same Route From 200 Years Ago

First thing, we will speak about Parshat Massei. In Parshat Massei, we saw **the special journeys** that the people of Israel merited, the special route they took for 40 years from Egypt to the Land of Israel. And this route, it is exactly the route that the Tribes took

when they brought up the coffin of Yaakov from Egypt to his burial place in the Cave of Machpelah.

And there **are great secrets** in this route, because it was **42 journeys**, and the world was created with the Name of 42 (Mem-Bet), it is like for example "Ana B'Choach" which has 42 letters in it. There are many names, and in every world, there are 42 letters. For example, if you count from the beginning of "In the beginning the L-rd created" (Bereshit Bara Elokim), count 42 letters—with these letters the Holy One, Blessed be He, created the entire world, rotated and encompassed the entire world with them. The Holy One, Blessed be He, did everything for the sake of the nation of Israel, for the entire world was not created except for Israel.

And the Holy One, Blessed be He, saw that the nation of Israel was destined to be scattered to the 4 corners of the earth, therefore He led all the six hundred thousand, and Moshe and Aharon and seventy elders, with the Ark of the Covenant and the entire Tabernacle, through the desert in 42 journeys. And behold, in all the journeys, there is not the letter *Zayin* (ז). Why? Because on Shabbat they would rest, they would not travel. And in all the journeys, they merited to say the "Prayer for a Journey" (Tefilat HaDerech), for when they would begin to travel, they would say: "And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moshe said: 'Rise up, Hashem, and let Your enemies be scattered; and let them that hate You flee before You.'"

Where Do People Hike Today?

Our Sages say that in the 42 journeys, the nation of Israel, in the way of their walking and in their encampments, were sifting the sparks of holiness that were in these places where people do not usually go. [And therefore this was also the route of the sons of Yaakov when they brought up the bed of Yaakov from Egypt, to sift the sparks of holiness.] "Massei" (מסעי) equals in Gematria "Gevurah" (גבורה - Might/Severity), an allusion to the sifting of the sparks of holiness.

And therefore, in one place they would encamp for a year, and in another place two years, and there a month, and in some of the places less than one day, because it was **all according to the sparks of holiness that were there to be sifted**. These were special journeys like no other!

And the nation of Israel lacked nothing in the desert; the Holy One, Blessed be He, brought down Manna for them from heaven, and they had **special air conditioners** - special air, for they were surrounded by the Clouds of Glory. And in these years, they merited to learn Torah from the mouth of Moshe, the Faithful Shepherd (Raya Meheimna)—do you know what that is? The second mouth of the Holy One, Blessed be He; actually, it is the first mouth! Moshe our teacher heard the Torah from the mouth of Hashem, and he gave it to the children of Israel—what a merit they had!

And now in our time, the main sifting is through the study of the Torah; just as the nation of Israel traveled and thereby sifted the sparks, so we now travel in the Sea of the Talmud and sift the sparks. As it is written: "Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and they that return of her with righteousness," and **Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld** says: "Zion shall be redeemed with justice" (ציון במשפט תיפדה) is the Gematria of "Talmud Yerushalmi" (תלמוד ירושלמי), "and they that return of her with righteousness"

(ושביה בצדקה) is the Gematria of "Talmud Bavli" (תלמוד בבלי), through which the people of Israel go out of exile by sifting the sparks of holiness, with the help of Hashem, May He Be Blessed.

And therefore this is the Name of 42, which is the seal of the Holy One, Blessed be He: "Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh" (I Will Be What I Will Be) - twice the name Ehyeh (אֵהְיֶה) equals exactly 42 (Mem-Bet). And therefore, the Magen Avraham brings down in the name of the Kabbalists that in the reading of the Torah, one should not stop in the middle of the 42 journeys, because there is a holy Name in it.

And this is a very good thing, that every person should merit at least once a week to say these 42 journeys, and this works wonders and salvations, and guards the person.

The Longest Sermon Ever

Now, with the help of Hashem, we will go on our way to speak about the Book of Deuteronomy (*Devarim*) which **we are beginning this week**—"These are the words which Moshe spoke to all of Israel." We have already brought in the name of **the Vilna Gaon**, and the **Maggid of Dubno** brings this down as well, that in all of the first four books of the Torah, the Holy One, Blessed be He, spoke through the throat of Moshe, but the book of *Mishneh Torah* (Deuteronomy), Moshe our Teacher said it himself, after hearing it from the Holy One, Blessed be He.

Rabbi Yerucham of Mir said that the Book of Deuteronomy is the "Book of the Mussar of Mussars" (the ultimate book of ethical instruction), which is entirely fear of Heaven and the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven. And just as they say about the "Song of Songs" that "all the songs are holy, but the Song of Songs is the Holy of Holies," so too the Book of Deuteronomy is the "Mussar of Mussars"—for it consists of words of rebuke that Moshe said to the nation of Israel.

The entire Book of Deuteronomy was spoken from the mouth of Moshe during the final 40 days before he passed away, and they are words of rebuke to the nation of Israel, **words sharp as goads!**

And why did he rebuke them only at the end of his days? Because had he rebuked them beforehand, then every subsequent moment they saw him, they would remember the rebuke and feel ashamed, thinking, "Moshe knows that I did this and I did that." Therefore, Moshe waited until close to the time he was going to his eternal home.

And even when he rebuked, Moshe our Teacher still did everything gently and with hints, and this is a **great moral lesson** for us—a lesson that when you see a person making a mistake, while it is true you must put them in their place and rebuke them, **on the other hand**, it is forbidden to embarrass any Jew! And just as a person wants others to rebuke him [gently], so should he rebuke his fellow, because it is always possible to arrange everything with wisdom in the most beautiful way, without him being embarrassed. If the words are spoken with warmth and love, everything works out. We were privileged to have a leader like Moshe our Teacher, in how he taught us the way to rebuke!

The Seal Upon the Hand

The four books of the Torah and the Book of Deuteronomy correspond to the Tefillin, and this is how it goes: Behold, **the Tefillin of the head contain four sections of the Torah divided into four compartments**—"Sanctify to Me every firstborn," "And it shall be when He brings you," "Hear [O Israel]," "And it shall come to pass if you surely hearken." And in the Tefillin of the hand, there are also these same four sections, but they are all in one single compartment and are not divided. These four sections correspond to the four letters of the Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei', Blessed be He; this is how one intends in their meditations. The Tefillin of the hand includes the entire Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei'.

The exact same thing applies to the four books of the Torah we were privileged to finish just now—they correspond to the four letters of the Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei'. And the fifth book is like the Tefillin of the hand, which includes all the four preceding books.

The holy Arizal says in *Sha'ar HaKavanot* on the verse "Place me like a seal upon your heart"—the "seal" is the *Shechinah* (Divine Presence) which stands opposite the heart in the Tefillin of the hand, and so too the **Book of Deuteronomy corresponds to the *Shechinah*.**

And therefore, we begin the Book of Deuteronomy precisely during the time of "Bein HaMeitzarim" (the Three Weeks of mourning), which is [associated with] the *Shechinah*—to raise the Divine Presence from the dust (*le'okma shechinta me'afra*), which is our entire goal during these days: to encourage the Holy Presence and raise Her from the dust.

The Matter of the Lulav and Its Species During "Bein HaMeitzarim"

In the book *Ta'amei HaMitzvot*, it is written that the Five Books of the Torah correspond to the letters of the Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei'. And even though there are only four letters in the Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei', the Book of Genesis (*Bereishit*) corresponds to the **tip of the letter Yod of the Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei', because the Book of Genesis guides the human being—and therefore it is called "The Book of the Upright" (*Sefer HaYashar*) or "The Book of Proper Conduct" (*Sefer Derech Eretz*), and it precedes the entire Torah because "proper conduct precedes the Torah" (*derech erez kadmah laTorah*). Therefore, it corresponds to the tip of the *Yod*.**

And the Book of Exodus (*Shemot*)—the Exodus from Egypt, the giving of the Torah, the splitting of the Red Sea—corresponds to the *Yod* of 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei', which is the Sephirah of *Chochmah* (Wisdom). The Book of Leviticus (*Vayikra*) corresponds to the letter *Hei* of the Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei'. The Book of Numbers (*Bamidbar*) corresponds to the letter *Vav* of the Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei'. And the Book of Deuteronomy is the final letter *Hei* of the Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei', which is the aspect of *Malchut* (Kingship/Sovereignty). And so said the

Maggid to the Beit Yosef, that the Book of Deuteronomy is the aspect of *Malchut*, and *Malchut* includes all the upper Sephirot.

Thus we find that the first four books correspond to the letters *Yod-Hei-Vav*, which numerically add up in Gematria to 21, the same value as the Name *Ehyeh* (Aleph, Hei, Yod, Hei). Furthermore, these letters *Yod-Hei-Vav* equal 21, which is the number of the 21 days of "Bein HaMeitzarim" that we are currently in. For during the Destruction, the final letter *Hei*—the *Shechinah*—became separated, and now during these days, we must care for the *Shechinah* to raise Her from the dust, so that the Name may be complete. We take this final *Hei* and connect it back to the Name *Yod-Hei-Vav*. And this is exactly why we begin the Book of Deuteronomy right now—to connect the letter *Hei* to the letters *Yod-Hei-Vav*.

We have the same concept in **the Four Species of the Lulav**: we have the Lulav, the Hadassim, and the Aravot. These three species correspond to the Tetragrammaton, and the Etrog represents the final *Hei* of the Name 'Yod', 'Hei', 'Vav' and 'Hei'—and we join them together.

Therefore, Moshe opened for us now with words of rebuke, and therefore we begin the Book of Deuteronomy during these 21 days, which are days of crying over the destruction of the exile. This is *Ehyeh*, which is the World of Repentance (*Teshuvah*), and "great is repentance, for it reaches all the way to the Throne of Glory."

Why the Rabbi Cried at the Zoo

On the Seventeenth of Tammuz, the days of "Bein HaMeitzarim" begin, and it is written in the Holy Zohar and in *Seder Olam Rabbah* (at the beginning of Section 4) that on the Seventeenth of Tammuz, Noah sent out the dove to see if the waters had receded, and "the dove found no rest." The Congregation of Israel is compared to a dove, and the Congregation of Israel has also found no rest since the day of the 17th of Tammuz, as she wanders and roams; therefore, she became like a "Niddah" (impure/estranged)—*Niddah* also being from the language of *na'a venada* (wandering and roaming). Therefore, great strength is needed now to bring joy to the *Shechinah*, to raise Her from the dust.

You should know that the months of the year shine through the Name *Aleph, Dalet, Nun, Yod* (Divine Lordship), and this is how it goes: If we spell out the letters of the Name *Aleph, Dalet, Nun, Yod* in full (*Miluy*), the letter *Aleph* has three letters, and the *Dalet* also has three, and the *Nun* has three, and the *Yod* also has three. Thus, three times four letters is twelve letters, corresponding to the twelve months of the year! *Aleph*—Nisan, Iyar, Sivan. *Dalet*—Dal (poor/lowly) Tammuz and Av, from the expression of "helping the poor/lowly," because in these months it is the time of the *Shechinah* which needs to be elevated. Afterward, the *Tav* is Elul, and so on. Furthermore, our Rabbis said that "Tammuz Av" has the same Gematria (numerical value) as "Te'enah" (fig tree), based on the verse: "He who guards the fig tree shall eat its fruit." We are waiting for the great lights.

Now pay attention! This week the month of Av begins, and we have already said that from the 17th of Tammuz until the Ninth of Av, we have a key of hours—528 hours. And from the Rosh Chodesh (New Moon) of Av, all the nine days equal 216 hours,

which is the numerical value of *Aryeh* (Lion), because the zodiac sign (*mazal*) of the month of Av is *Aryeh*. This is the great power—whose sign is the lion—to sift and clarify all the sparks of holiness: "A lion has roared, who will not fear?"

I already told you about **Chacham Avraham Raful**, **that one time** his grandchildren took him to the zoo. When they arrived at the lion's cage, he began to cry. His grandchildren did not understand what happened: "Grandpa, what happened?" and he was weeping.

Everyone saw an old man crying. He explained to them: "Do you know what the Gemara says? That the Holy One, Blessed be He, **roars like a lion** every single day: 'Woe to the children, for whose sake I destroyed My House, burned My Sanctuary, and exiled them among the nations.' When I saw the lion, I was reminded of the words of the Gemara, and I am crying over the pain of the *Shechinah*." That is how much he would grieve over the pain of the Divine Presence.

The Mice and the Curse

Now **we must know** that the great thing to strengthen ourselves in right now is not to hurt anyone! We must act only with love and brotherhood, like the character trait of Aharon the Priest, and this will bring the Redemption closer.

Rabbi Zilberstein shared that there was a certain young married scholar (*avrech*) in Lakewood, a great genius, who was offered a position to be the Rabbi in a certain community in America—a large community with thousands of families that had no one to sustain them. He investigated this community, and he discovered a terrible thing about it: anyone who came to this community did not succeed; everyone wanted to, but they did not succeed. Every rabbi who arrived! Every single time there were delays and difficulties. **This young scholar did not know what to do**; on one hand, he did not want to give up, but on the other hand, he feared that he too would not succeed, just as his predecessors had failed.

The scholar decided he must understand the secret of the curse hanging over this place. **What did he do?** He went to one of the elders of the community, an old, G-d-fearing Jew, and asked him to tell him the history of the community. **The old man told him this story:**

Sixty years ago, there was a Rabbi here who was a great Torah scholar. They tried to remove him from the rabbinate because he would rebuke them and argue with them. They could not defeat him through gentle means, so on Purim, they sent him a magnificent gift, but they put mice inside. When his wife opened the package, the mice jumped out at her; she fainted and they had to take her to the hospital.

After this incident, the Rabbi and his wife realized that the members of the community were dangerous to them, and they immediately left the place and fled elsewhere. The old man said that from that day on, **a curse has hovered over the place**. Every time they try to establish the place, they fail—whatever they do, there is no success.

The scholar was stunned by the story and immediately asked: "Where is this Rabbi?" They told him that he had passed away a long time ago. The scholar went to consult

with Rabbi Elyashiv, and on Rabbi Elyashiv's advice, he took a large crowd with him to the grave of that Rabbi who had been hurt. At the grave, they begged him for forgiveness, and only afterward did he enter to become the community's rabbi, and he succeeded tremendously! **For sixty years they could not establish the city!** But the moment they begged him for forgiveness, everything sorted itself out. One cannot know how essential it is to be careful with the dignity of others, and not to demean any human being—not his person, and not his money.

A Recommendation for an Almost-Thief...

They tell a story about the **Chafetz Chaim**, who was sitting in the study hall (*Beit Midrash*). A certain Jew came to him and said, "Honorable Rabbi, please write me a letter of recommendation, I am lacking money." The Chafetz Chaim said to him, "I will write one for you, bring a piece of paper and I will write." The Jew looked right and left, saw some paper sitting on a table, and brought it to the Chafetz Chaim.

The Chafetz Chaim said to him, "No, that is theft (*gezel*), return it."

He brought him something else, and once again the Chafetz Chaim said, "It is forbidden," until the Chafetz Chaim said to him, "I will bring paper." And he rebuked him: "It is forbidden to take a thing from a person that is not yours! Do you not know how severe of a thing this is? It creates a negative angel, a destroyer."

But what is the wonder? Even though the Chafetz Chaim saw that the Jew had almost stolen paper from his fellow, the Chafetz Chaim did not give up on him. He knew that the man needed help; **he did not say to him**, "You do not deserve this, I will not write you a recommendation." Instead, he honored him with great respect, and **despite everything, wrote him the recommendation!**

After Whom was Rabbi Elyashiv Named?

There is a **wondrous story** about the Steipler (Rabbi Yaakov Yisrael Kanievsky), that someone was visiting him and gave him a pen to write something down, and forgot the pen with the Steipler. After a year and a half, the owner of the pen came to the Steipler again, and the Steipler was overjoyed to see him: **"I have been waiting for you for a year and a half to return your pen to you!"**

There is another inspiring story about the Steipler's extreme caution regarding the fear of theft (*gezel*), and this is an event that happened with his son, Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky, zt"l.

By the way, Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky was the son-in-law of Rabbi Elyashiv, and this week is the *Yahrzeit* (anniversary of passing) of Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv zt"l. Rabbi Elyashiv—what great merits he had, he disseminated Torah and led the Jewish people in an extraordinary way, and lived a long life. **Rabbi Elyashiv's grandfather** was the genius, **author of the *Leshem*—Rabbi Chaikel Elyashiv**, who was a mighty and great Kabbalist, and Rabbi Elyashiv was his only grandson, the son **of his daughter** [the family name Elyashiv is after his mother's maiden name]. They waited many years for this grandson, and when he was small he was not healthy and

the doctors did not believe he would live. But in reality, in the merit of the Torah and his good character traits and everything, he was privileged to establish an unparalleled family, and raised up the entire Jewish people, and lived for over a hundred years.

The name "Yosef Shalom" was given to him by his grandfather, the author of the *Leshem*—and why did he call him this?

Yosef is after Rabbi Yosef Chaim—the *Ben Ish Chai*, and **Shalom** is after the *Rashash* (Rabbi Shalom Sharabi), and he explained that these are **two pillars of the world**. When Rabbi Elyashiv was a child, he would help his grandfather, the author of the *Leshem*, in writing his books of Kabbalah, *Leshem Shevo V'Achlamah*.

A 5-Year-Old Roll of Paper...

And let us return to the story of his son-in-law, Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky, with his father, our master the Steipler: Rabbi Kanievsky related that after he got married, he once used [toilet] paper in the Steipler's house, and afterward he thought that perhaps he was forbidden from using the paper after he had married. For as long as he was unmarried, he was a member of the household, but now he was no longer a member of the household. Therefore, the next time he returned to the house, he brought a roll of paper with him, to return what he had used...

After five years, he noticed that there was a roll of paper standing completely covered in dust in his father's house. Rabbi Chaim recognized that this was the roll he had brought, and asked his sister, who lived with their father, the reason for the roll's fate. The sister said to him: "For several years we haven't known whose this is, and Father won't allow anyone to touch it"...

And Rabbi Chaim immediately said to her, "I brought it." For five years they did not touch it!

Do you understand what spiritual levels these are?!

An Aliyah to the Torah for 5 Shekels That Was Not Paid

I will tell you another awesome story: what "between man and his fellow" is, and that "the law of a prutah (a coin of small value) is like the law of a hundred." Here in Jerusalem, there is the **Shoshanim LeDavid synagogue**. There was a gabbai there, Rabbi Moshe Chai Sharabani. All of us would go to him all the time to the Shoshanim LeDavid synagogue, and especially on Thursday night (*Leil Shishi*), all the Rabbis would come and give lectures—Rabbi Yaakov Mutzafi and all the geniuses of the world, and Chacham Yitzhak Kaduri, and Chacham Yehoshua Sharabani—and everyone would sit to study Kabbalah, every Thursday night, and Chacham Sasson Levi. It was a sight like no other; a person entering there would see things you do not see [elsewhere].

Rabbi Moshe Chai Sharabani, after he passed away, came to his son Yehoshua in a dream, saying to him: "Look Yehoshua, I bought you an *Aliyah* (call to the Torah) several years ago for 5 shekels. I don't know if I paid for it. I wrote it in the ledger but

in the end I did not pay. See, in the ledger it is not written that I paid. I ask you to pay it for me; it will bring me gratification (*nachat ruach*)."

Rabbi Yehoshua went, opened the ledger, and saw that indeed, several years prior, his father had bought Yehoshua an Aliyah for 5 shekels! **Look at what exactness there is in the Upper Worlds!**

Where Did the Rescue Forces Disappear To?

Therefore, even if a person sees problems and issues, he should know that there is a Cause of all Causes and a Reason of all Reasons. There is a Leader of the world, He leads us, and even if a person sees thunder on a clear day and various troubles, if a person knows that there is a Leader and there is a Creator of the world and he lives with such faith, nothing in the world is difficult for him!

Today I told a young man who was visiting me that there was once a father and son who arrived in a large city and were walking down the main street in the morning. **Suddenly, they hear a massive explosion.** Wanting to see the source of this explosion, they noticed on the parallel street that a building of about fifty stories was collapsing, becoming a heap of ruins in a moment. They began to run away, crying out for help, and they are astonished that no one approaches to help, no one bothers, no one speaks, the rescue forces do not come, they dial them but they do not pay attention.

And behold, they see a person who appears to be a resident of the place and turned to him: "Tell us, do you know what is happening here? No one is coming, look what happened."

The man said to them: "**Are you tourists?** Why, for a month they have been announcing that there would be a controlled demolition here... and since it is a supervised, controlled explosion, no one needs to worry about it. It is already known, it is planned in advance, there is someone managing affairs."

So it is in the course of our lives: there are surprises, massive explosions, and one must know how to stand strong in them, in the trials. Sometimes a person says, "What is this explosion?" But a person must remember that everything is controlled. Just like a person who enters—may Hashem save us—an operating room; he sees knives, scissors, and all kinds of instruments, but he does not ask unnecessary questions because he knows that here are master doctors, and they know their work.

The Directive: Do Not Raise the Rent

Therefore, we need these things now so that we know how to shelter ourselves—to know now that this is the time to do what we must, with the help of the Almighty and His salvation.

I just wanted to tell you another thing that happened here not long ago in the Shmuel HaNavi neighborhood: a large family rented an apartment in Shmuel HaNavi. The father is a Torah scholar, and they lived there for some time. How much did the rent cost them? Three thousand. Rent there costs six thousand; for a five-room

apartment there, at least five, six, or seven thousand. But the landlord asked him for three thousand.

In the course of time, this landlord passed away. His daughter came and said, "Look, with all due respect, I have gained this apartment through inheritance. But from today, forgive me, I want **seven thousand**—I will take six thousand. Father did you a kindness—three thousand; now I need the kindness, pay me six thousand from today."

These renters thought she was right. Where will we move, where will we go, where will we find such a thing? They said, "Fine, we will pay." They agreed that on Sunday they would bring the money. Sunday came, she (one of the renters) waits for them—they do not come. Monday—they do not come. Tuesday—they do not come. She called them on the phone, "What is happening with you?"

The woman said, "Listen, I will tell you the truth. On Shabbat, my father came to me in a dream and said to me: 'My dear daughter, do me a kindness, **do not take more money from the renters than what they have paid until today**, because in the merit of my helping a Torah scholar, they are elevating me in the Upper World from level to level. Therefore, I ask of you to make do with what you have, do not take more! Leave them in peace!'"

This story was told to me by Rabbi Yitzhak Cohen, who was told by Rabbi Abadi, who was their neighbor!

The Van was Discovered in Shfar'am

There was another wondrous story about a young married scholar (avrech) from the North—a very special scholar who, in order to supplement his income, would do some driving. He had a van and would take the children to the Torah school (*Talmud Torah*) and bring them back home, and from this, he made a bit of a livelihood.

One day he got up in the morning—Arabs had made his van disappear; he cannot find it! And during that same period, several other livelihood problems came upon him. At that same time, **he was also marrying off his daughter** and needed a lot of money, and he had nothing to bring for his financial obligations. But the scholar did not complain, and only said, "Master of the Universe, I know that everything You do to me is for my own good." In this way, he would thank the Holy One, Blessed be He.

And behold, pay attention to a wondrous thing: about two days after the theft of the vehicle, a neighbor of this scholar says to him: "I am renovating my house, I am going to Shfar'am to buy flooring, come with me, I am afraid to go alone."

The scholar said to him, "No problem, I am coming with you." **He went with him, they arrived in Shfar'am, they enter a store.** From here to there, he sees in one of the spots his van. He says to his friend, "Look, here is my car..."

He got into the car, peeked here and there and saw that everything was empty. Quickly, he got into the van and drove, and said to his neighbor, "You drive behind me, and if there is any problem, we will call the police." And in this way, he arrived home with the stolen car.

After he arrived home, he said: "Even so, let's check—maybe there is some ammunition, one can never know..." And behold, he checks in the car, and what does he find? First of all, a knife... immediately he took it out of the car. And he checks further, **and behold he sees** a bag. He opens the bag and is stunned! There were **300,000 NIS** inside! They sent it to him from Heaven.

And the scholar said: "This is the exact sum I need for my daughter's wedding!" And behold, he has the money now, look what that is. All the time the *Shechinah* is caring for us, and now is the time that a person should care about the pain of the *Shechinah*. When a person knows everything, he understands very well that this is Divine Providence—"I am with him in distress."

Here is a literal translation of the text you provided, organized into clear sections matching the original layout.

One Answer to All Questions!

In the book *Likutey Torah* by our master the Ari, of blessed memory, on Parshat Shoftim, on the verse "If a matter for judgment is hidden from you" (Deuteronomy 17:8), **a fearsome Midrash is brought regarding the magnitude of the destruction of the Temple:**

"Willful sinners have dug pits for me, which is not according to Your Torah" (Psalms 119:85).

At the **time of the destruction**, the ministering angels asked the Holy One, Blessed be He:

- **The First Question:** "Master of the Universe, You wrote in the Torah: *'he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust'* (Leviticus 17:13), yet it is written: *'They shed their blood like water around Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them'* (Psalms 79:3). Where is the covering with dust? Rivers of blood! **This is one question.**"
- **The Second Question: And the ministering angels further said** to the Holy One, Blessed be He: "It is written in the Torah: *'Whether it is a cow or a sheep, you shall not slaughter it and its young on the same day'* (Leviticus 22:28), yet come and see, Master of the Universe, children by the thousands and tens of thousands are being slaughtered [on the same day]."
- **The Third Question: And the ministering angels asked further: "Behold, it is written in the Torah:** *'Then the priest shall command that they empty the house'* (Leviticus 14:36) [so that the vessels do not become impure], yet here they did not empty the house, but rather burned the Holy Temple with all its precious vessels, and burned all the finest things in the world."

The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to them: **"Is there any peace in the world? Since there is no peace, there is nothing!"**

And all this the Torah hinted to us in this verse:

- **"If a matter for judgment is hidden from you, between blood and blood"** — this refers to *"he shall pour out its blood..."*
- **"Between judgment and judgment"** — this refers to *"it and its young..."* as mentioned above.
- **"And between plague and plague"** — this refers to *"and the priest shall command..."* as mentioned above.

And the answer to all of this is: **"matters of dispute within your gates"** — for through disputes and the absence of peace among them, it causes all of this.

And the verse concludes: "then you shall arise and go up to the place" — which is through Jerusalem, "a city bound together" (Psalms 122:3), in which all of Israel became friends and companions, and through the Torah they will unite and the peace will be mediated between them. **Therefore, now in these days**, this is the time we need to unite.

This Caused the Passing of the Ari at a Young Age

You know that now is the anniversary of the passing of **our master the Ari**. He told the Maharach"u [Rabbi Chaim Vital] that he was going to his eternal home because of a certain problematic issue—that he had revealed certain secrets.

Maharach"u said to him, "Tell me, is there nothing to be done?" The Rabbi said to him, "Let us see what can be done," until he said, "There is one remedy: if there is love and brotherhood among us."

They took everyone into one courtyard, all the companions, and spoke intensely about having love among friends, and it was truly like that for about six or seven months of great love.

One day, a dispute arose among the wives, and it passed to the husbands. Our master the Ari entered sad and said, "This is it, I have seen that the S"M [accusing angel] is winning, there is nothing left to do." Thus our master the Ari passed away at a very young age—at the age of 38. See what happens when there is no yielding, love, and brotherhood.

Leah Profited from the Story of Dinah...

They say that a person should see the greatness of the reward of yielding from **Leah our mother**. For during the pregnancy with Dinah, Leah was supposed to give birth to a boy; she was pregnant with a male child, which was Yoseph.

Leah said to herself: *"How can I bring forth a son while my sister [Rachel] remains lesser than one of the handmaids? If I bring forth a son, my sister will only have one son, Binyamin. I yield."* Master of the Universe! She prayed and cried to the Holy One, Blessed be He, to change this boy into a girl for her. He changed her into Dinah so that Rachel would have both Yoseph and Binyamin, and so it was.

But one must wonder at this matter: was there not **a difficult story** with Dinah? Where Shechem the son of Hamor greatly wanted the daughter of Yaakov, who was incomparably beautiful, and he would play music in the street. She only went out to see the music and all the antics, and they grabbed her, took her, and defiled her, and it was a great trouble. Yaakov our father heard of this matter and grieved very, very much. When Shimon and Levi came, you know they overturned the entire city of Shechem, killing everyone securely, everyone. How does Yaakov our father say: "*which I took... with my sword and with my bow*" [translated by Targum Onkelos as "with my prayer and my petition"]?

And this is seemingly a **wondrous thing**: my friend, behold, Leah performed a kindness; she did not want her sister to be insulted. If so, how did this happen to Dinah? Behold, she performed a kindness with her, she yielded to her. What is happening?

Rather, our Rabbis say, **hear a wondrous thing**: They wanted to kill this girl [Osnat, born from Dinah]. Yaakov our father took her, wrote an amulet for her, and sent her to Egypt. Where did she go? She was called Osnat. Where did she go? To the house of Potiphera, priest of On, who had no children—he was barren and his wife was barren. She said, "This is the most beautiful place," and there she grew up in that house. Years later, Yoseph the Tzaddik came there. Who would be his wife? It was Osnat, the daughter of Dinah! And she became the wife of Yoseph the Tzaddik, from whom he brought forth Menashe and Ephraim.

What happened? Menashe and Ephraim are two tribes! You yielded on one child, on one tribe—you received two tribes. That is all! A person does not see the salvation immediately, but he should know that everything is from Heaven; it is the Cause of Causes and the Reason of Reasons. A person yields—it all comes from Heaven, it is not a simple thing. That is all.

A "Bypass Road" Around Destroyers

Behold, how Moshe our teacher rebukes the nation of Israel: "*as the bees do*" (Deuteronomy 1:44)—a wonder of wonders, gently, calmly, and this is a very great thing. How to rebuke, how to teach, how to take, and that everything should be the best that it can possibly be.

And behold, we see now what our master the Ari is. The main thing, he says, if we want to succeed, the first thing that opens all the gates of prayer is for a person to accept upon himself the commandment of "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18).

This creates a bypass road around obstructors. There are many things—sometimes a person prays, and some negative angels are created from him who want to stop the prayer. Our master the Ari says:

"I will give you good advice: if before the prayer you say: '*Behold, I accept upon myself the positive commandment of "Love your fellow as yourself," and behold, I love each and every one of the Children of Israel as myself and with all my wealth,*' through this you build a track that no damaging force can harm your prayer, grab it, or delay it."

And then his prayer is "desirable."

Therefore, the Rabbi, the Ari, warns before every prayer, every morning before a person prays the Shacharit (morning) prayer, he should accept upon himself the positive commandment of "Love your fellow as yourself."

Therefore, the S"M (accusing angel) could not tolerate the power of our master the Ari. He said, *"This is my greatest enemy—how he warns about love and brotherhood, and behold, that is where I dance!"* And also the study of Kabbalah: he explained everything that Rashb"i [Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai] said in an extraordinary way, and then *"with this [book of the Zohar] they shall go out of exile with mercy"*—with this he subdues all the accusers, nullifies them from the world, subdues them, and does not let them live. He [S"M] says: *"How can I let him live?"*

The Ari Did Not Enter Jerusalem

Therefore, the S"M said to our master the Ari: *"You shall not come to Jerusalem! Woe to you if you step foot in Jerusalem!"* Why? *"Because if you come to Jerusalem, you will conquer the entire world. You will nullify the power of the Kelipah [husk of impurity]."*

They said of the Ari: he sees that one of his feet is placed on the Temple Mount, on the site of the Holy Temple, and one foot is placed—woe to us—on the S"M, the place of the most terrible impurity. He says to him: *"I ride upon both of them."*

The Rabbi of Komarno says that it is not advisable for great Tzaddikim (righteous ones) to live in Jerusalem, because the S"M can provoke them. But nevertheless, one must know a wonder of wonders: how these three—Rashb"i, our master the Ari, and the Rashash [Rabbi Shalom Sharabi]—are one soul.

- In the beginning, it was Rashb"i who came to the world to reveal all the Torah that he wrote in the Zohar.
- He [the Ari] revealed it in the Eight Gates, *Etz Chaim* and the Eight Gates that he taught to Maharach"u, which Maharach"u wrote down afterward. Our master the Ari told them that he passed away young but still had not finished doing the work, so he would come again; he came in the form of the Rashash. All the disciples of the Rashash—the ten disciples he had—they were the disciples of our master the Ari.

Our master the Ari would take his disciples and go with them, sit with them—for example, what is called today the Forest of the Ba'al Shem Tov, where there is a place where R' Yossi of Peqi'in is buried; there he is buried, and around him are rocks. Our master the Ari said: *"Here sat Rashb"i, here sat R' Eleazar, here is this [one], let us sit in their places because we are connected to them, and we will expound great discourses on the secrets of Kabbalah."* A wonder of wonders what took place there. But that is how it goes.

But see a wondrous thing, a wonder of wonders. It is written: *"You ascended on high, you took captives"* (Psalms 68:19). The Hebrew word for "captives", 'Shin', 'Bet', 'Yod' (שב"י), is an acronym for Shimon bar Yochai. All the main essence of Moshe our teacher ascending on high was to bring the Torah of 'Shin', 'Bet', 'Yod', the Torah of Rashb"i—that was the main purpose of the ascension.

- When did Rashb"i pass away? In the fifth week of the Omer, which is "**Hod**" (Splendor). On which day? On the fifth day of the week, which is "Hod shebeHod" (Splendor within Splendor), as is well known—Rashb"i is "**Hod shebeHod**". Why? Because upon his passing, he sweetened all the judgments, and all the troubles and problems that existed during the days of the Omer ceased.
- And behold, **the Ari passed away** in the fifth month, which is the month of Av when counting from Nisan, on the fifth day of the month, which is also "Hod shebeHod."
- And also the **Rashash passed away** in the month of Shevat, which is the fifth month when counting from Tishrei, and he passed away on the tenth of Shevat. The tenth of Shevat is also "Hod shebeHod."

How does this work? Because within the ten Sefirot, there are five *Chasadim* (Kindnesses) and five *Gevurot* (Severities). The first five days of the month correspond to the five Chasadim (*Chesed, Gevurah, Tiferet, Netzach, Hod*), and the next five days are the five Gevurot (*Chesed, Gevurah, Tiferet, Netzach, Hod*). Thus, the 10th of Shevat is the "Hod" of the five Gevurot. The main thing is that we must strive now.

The very first law written by Maran [the Shulchan Aruch]:

"One should strengthen himself like a lion (*Ari*) to rise in the morning for the service of his Creator, so that he awakens the dawn."

By way of a hint, the son of Rabbi Baruch said to me: "*One should strengthen himself like a lion*" (*Yitgaber ka'Ari*)—by way of a hint, ***strengthen yourself to conduct yourself like our master the Ari (ka-Ari)...***

The Hatred of a Single Person

But now especially, we need to focus our strengths. For these days are important days. The Gemara in Tractate Gittin says:

"Because of Kamtza and Bar-Kamtza, Jerusalem was destroyed" (Gittin 55b) — a wonder of wonders.

If a person looks at this story, it is a terrible and fearsome thing; the Gemara says how far **baseless hatred** reached.

There was one man whose name was Kamtza, and another whose name was Bar-Kamtza. A certain host loved one of them but was an enemy to the other. He said to his servant to invite his friend to a great celebration. The servant was confused and invited the enemy. When the host saw him sitting there he said to him: "**Get out of here!**"

The unwanted guest said to him: "I will give you the cost of the entire feast, just leave me be and do not shame me; there are sages here, there is a public here, leaders of the state, leave me be."

He said to him: "No! **Get out.**"

The sages were sitting there and were afraid, because he was a **very wealthy man**, so they did not speak, and they also said, "He will not listen to us." The offended guest went and became an informer and a denouncer, and went **to take revenge on all of Israel**—men, women, children, the innocent. He adopted the practice of Haman the Wicked, and thus, because of the hatred of a single person, the entire Temple was destroyed. It is not a simple thing. The Zohar says that the moment a **person awakens the Prosecutor Above**—woe to us what can happen. Therefore, one must be very, very careful.

The Primary Categories of Damages That Caused the Destruction

The Gemara says, there are four primary categories of damages: **The Ox, the Pit, the Spreader (Maveh), and the Fire (Hev'er)**.

According to the plain meaning:

- **Ox:** This is an ox that goes and damages with its feet.
- **Pit:** This is a person who left an open pit, and another person goes and falls inside.
- **Spreader (Maveh):** The Gemara states two opinions; one is that it is [an animal] eating, and the second opinion is that it is a human being speaking—"*If you will request, request*" (*Im tiv'ayun be'u*) [Yishayahu 21:12]—the mouth.
- **Fire (Hev'er):** This is a person who lit a fire, and this fire spread, went out, damaged, and burned the fields of others.

Rabbi Menachem Azariah of Fano came and said: "I will explain to you what this hints to."

- **"The Ox"** — this is the **Sin of the Golden Calf**; therefore, there are these days in which we suffer for the Sin of the Golden Calf, how they did such a thing.
- **"The Pit"** — this is the **selling of Yoseph**, whom they threw into a pit.
- **"The Spreader (Maveh)"** — this refers to **the Spies** who spoke evil slander about the Land of Israel: "*Because Hashem hates us, He brought us out of Egypt*" (Deuteronomy 1:27). And regarding the Sin of the Golden Calf, it is written: "*and they rose up to make merry*" (Exodus 32:6). Our Rabbis say "to make merry" (*letzachek*) means forbidden relations and bloodshed; and at that same time, they also **killed Hur**, violating the prohibition of bloodshed.

And the Gemara says that the First Temple was destroyed because of idolatry, forbidden relations, and bloodshed; and the Second Temple because of baseless hatred. It turns out that the Second Temple was burned because of **the Pit**. "The Pit" is baseless hatred—"*and they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him*" (Genesis 37:4), and thus they threw him into the pit.

It emerges that the Ox, the Pit, and the Spreader **brought about the Fire (Hev'er)**—the burning of our Holy and Beautiful Temple. These three caused the burning of the House of Hashem, woe to us.

A Scoundrel with the Permission of the Torah

I just want to tell you a certain **story** that the Gemara says in Gittin, a story that is terrible and **shocking to the depths of the soul** (Gittin 58a).

Rabbi Yehuda said in the name of Rav, what is the meaning of that which is written: "*They oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance*" (Micah 2:2)? A story of a certain man who set his eyes upon the wife of his master. His master had **a wife who was incomparably beautiful**, and he set his eyes upon her. The Evil Inclination. Who was his master? Not his master who taught him Torah, but rather one who **taught him carpentry**.

One time, his master needed money. The carpentry teacher needed money. This student said to him: "**I have money**, my parents are wealthy, I am willing to lend you the sum you require. But I do not have it here; **send your wife to me** to my house, and I will give it to her."

He sent his wife to bring the money. He waited a day, two days. He returned to him and asked him: "**Where is my wife?**"

He said to him: "I sent her away immediately, but I heard that ruffians played with her on the way." Oy, oy, oy.

He said to him: "What shall I do now?"

The student said to him: "If you listen to my advice, **divorce her**."

The teacher said to him: "But **her marriage contract (Ketubah) is large**."

He said to him: "I will lend you [the money to pay it]." He gave him money, and he divorced her.

Now, this teacher needed **to return the money**. He said to him: "I do not have money to return to you."

He said to him: "Come to my house, serve me." **He came to his house, and what did he see? That he [the student] had married his wife. They were playing with one another, and he was serving them. What tears descend from Heaven!** The Gemara says: **Upon this, the decree of the destruction of the Holy Temple was sealed.**

What brazenness. Instead of thanking him for teaching him a trade, he dispossessed him of his property—a wonder of wonders, the counsel of Ahithophel.

He did everything "properly," as it were: the divorce bill (*Get*) was kosher, the loan was given according to law, the teacher was required to return the money, but—a **scoundrel with the permission of the Torah** (*Naval be-reshut ha-Torah*). To conduct oneself in such a manner. This is a deed shocking to the depths of the soul.

The Holy Temple Ascends into the Air

Behold, every generation in whose days the Holy Temple is not built, **it is as if it was destroyed in its days**. Why is it not created today? Because we **have still not repented**. What does "destroyed" mean? It is **as if right now it is built**, and you see it burning because of our iniquities. Destroyed. That is the situation. **A fire rages and burns**. It is very painful. It is not a simple thing.

You know what battles took place here so that the Holy Temple would not be destroyed? If a person looks at the Midrash, there were sages here who said: "**It will never be destroyed**." They would say: "What can the Holy One, Blessed be He, do? We have a 'patent' [a solution]." They were highly skilled; if enemies should come, "**We will bring down angels to fight with them**, that is our power." Such sages existed.

And so it was. Enemies came, they brought down angels, and drove them away. They said: "Now they will come to destroy it? We have the power to take the entire Holy Temple and **raise it into the air**; let them enter, what will they do? They will not be able to destroy the Holy Temple." **And so they did—they raised Jerusalem into the air, the Holy Temple. But the Holy One, Blessed be He, stepped upon the Holy Temple and said: "Go back down, they are wicked, they do not listen to Me!"** It is not a simple thing. Therefore, one must strengthen oneself very, very much, so that a person notices how to practice **love, brotherhood, peace, and fellowship**.

I Will Not Cause Grief to the Shechinah!

I will tell you another story that happened here in Jerusalem, in Ramot, now in our days:

There was a certain Jew, a Torah scholar (*Talmid Chacham*), what a wonder! Sitting and learning. His parents bought him **a two-room apartment**, and he sits and learns all the time. He already had a family of eight children, and he had the **opportunity to expand the house**; his parents collected money for him and said: "Let us expand for you."

He had a neighbor who was newly arrived. He [the scholar] obtained a permit and everything, and was already coming to expand. And behold, the neighbor **opens windows** right where he needs to expand the house. He said to him: "My friend, **you are damaging me**." He [the neighbor] said to him: "I will close it for you."

When he came to expand, he brought a tractor, and the neighbor lies down [in front of it] and says to him: "You will not build! You are blocking my windows, you will not build."

He said to him: "But I have a permit, I have agreements, you came here brand new." He would not yield.

That young Torah scholar (*Avrech*) did not create a dispute; he stepped aside. His wife said to him: "Look, it cannot go on like this. **Sue him in rabbinical court (*Beit Din*)**."

He said to her: "There is no need for lawsuits in rabbinical court. This is grief to the Divine Presence (*Shechinah*); yield, leave it alone."

Well, she said: "**My husband says to yield—we will yield.**" There is nothing to be done. He said to her: "In this merit, we will merit to see **satisfaction (*Nachat*) from our children.**"

Take from Me a Seven-Room Apartment!

One day, a certain Jew arrived who had been in the Land for several years. He came to Ramot, entered the study hall (*Kollel*) with them, and there was no one to pay attention to him. This *Avrech* came to him and said to him: "Where are you from?" He said: "I want to study a little Torah." He sat down to study with him, and thus for a year and a half he would study with him.

One day, they had a celebration for completing a tractate (*Siyum*). The study partner (*Chavrusa*) went to his house and saw ten children inside two rooms. He said to him: "Look, I will tell you something. Hashem has graced me with a lot of money. I do not show that I have money, but Hashem gave it to me; all my children received money, they are all settled, I have everything. **I want something for the World to Come (*Olam HaBa*); you—this is the best. I will give you money, I will give you six or seven rooms, you will live in it, and this [current] house will also remain yours, you will receive rent, and thus you will have a livelihood.**"

Now imagine: if he had expanded the apartment, **he would not have received this.** But he acted for the sake of the Shechinah. Know that **the Shechinah knows how to take care of you**; everything that is meant for a person—he will receive it all, **just do not cause problems.** Know that everything is from Him, Blessed be He. A wonder of wonders.

And so Yaakov our father said to them: "*Assemble yourselves, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the end of days... Gather yourselves together, and hear, sons of Yaakov*" (Genesis 49:1-2). If we are in a single unity—that is the end of days.

The Number on the Arm Looked Familiar...

I will tell you another thing. This was told to me by **Rabbi Yitzchak Cohen**. He says that 40 years ago, there was a **group of drivers** in the Land. Once every half year they would gather, drink a cup of coffee, exchange experiences, and they always made sure to **practice love and brotherhood**, and thus one would help the other. They would see if **someone wronged his fellow** or took his work, and they would settle it.

One day, when they met, one of the drivers said: "Bring another cup of coffee, **I want to tell you** what happened to me this week. I took a fare—hear this, a wonder of wonders, it is unbelievable. The driver had a prosthesis, a prosthetic leg, but he was a good driver."

And he says: "They booked me with a certain **American tourist**. I arrived at the required hour, I honored the tourist. I see him with a **respectable cap**, he has a **gold lighter**. I put the suitcases in the trunk, and I want to go to Jerusalem, the Holy City. But on the way, I am **choking from the cigarette**—what a cigarette he had! I said, **I will also light a cigarette**, and so I pulled one out to light it. And then he says: 'No, no,'

and he pulls out his gold lighter, and he brings his hand forward to me so that I can light up."

"And then **I saw the number written on his arm**, and behold, I recognize this number that they made for him in the Holocaust. Well, he lit the cigarette, I start to drive, and I pull over to the side."

"I say to him: 'Tell me, I have a question, **are you a Holocaust survivor?**' He says, 'Yes.' 'Do you have anyone else who survived with you from the family, perhaps your brothers?' He says: 'No, **no one survived**. Perhaps I have a brother, but I have not seen him, I searched for him—and there is no such thing. I **believe that he too was murdered in the Holocaust**, and the entire family is gone. I arrived in the Land with friends, I wanted to take tours in the Land, and in a few months I am returning back.'"

Zalmele Rescued Me from the Machine

The driver says: "Now, come and hear what my story is. I myself arrived in the Land of Israel about 10 years ago. I **went to work in a certain kibbutz** near the Kinneret [Sea of Galilee], and I worked there **in an apple factory**, where they make apple sauce. There was a man there named **Zalmele**. And this Zalmele **did not speak**; he only cleaned the place, and he did not speak a single word to anyone. He was a Holocaust survivor."

"One morning, I was operating the machine for the apple sauce, and suddenly **I began to fall inside the giant machine**. I started to go inside, my leg was crushed, and I was shouting, 'Help!' **Suddenly, Zalmele came, reached his hands inside, and pulled me out at the last moment. He called an ambulance, and I was in the hospital for a year—that is why I have the prosthesis**. I recovered, left the hospital, and went to study a bit. I called the kibbutz and said, '**Thank you very much to Zalmele** who saved my life. But I am not coming back anymore.'"

I Rolled Up the Sleeves of Both of Them

The driver concludes and says: "When Zalmele reached out his hands, I clearly remember the number that was etched on his arm. And now, when the tourist reached out the lighter to me, I saw that the number Zalmele had **was exactly one number before his**. I said, 'Apparently they are brothers, and they went through [the numbering process] one right after the other.'"

"I stopped the vehicle, and I said to him: 'Come, I will take you on a bit of a trip.' **I drove with him to Tiberias**. The tourist says to me: 'What is this? This is long.' But I continued. I dropped him off next to Zalmele's house, went inside—I did not know if **Zalmele was still alive** or not—and behold, I see Zalmele. I call the tourist, **roll up Zalmele's sleeve** and this tourist's sleeve, and **then it became clear that they were brothers**. What joy there was there—something extraordinary."

"And this American tells him that **they used to love each other**, and they watched over each other, and saved many Jews. And he did not know why the Holy One, Blessed be He, took him from him [separated them], for they were bound together in one heart.

'How did he escape?' [he wondered]. 'And now, you have caused us to be joined together. I thank you very much.' **And then Zalmele began to speak.**

In Your Place You Will Be Seated

First of all, there must be **unity within a person's home**—that a person should yield, and not be exacting. If they hurt him, do to him, or ruin things for him—**what can build everything up** is unity. Now is the time.

Just like our master the Ari, like Aharon the Priest, "a lover of peace and a pursuer of peace", to greet everyone with a shining face, to study ethical teachings (*Mussar*) about this—how we can merit to raise the Divine Presence (*Shechinah*) from the dust. All of this is through love, brotherhood, and the absence of baseless hatred. If a person knows that everything is the handiwork of the Blessed Creator—"He spoke, and it was; He commanded, and it stood" (Psalms 33:9)—it was not [the other person] who did it, it was the Holy One, Blessed be He, who decreed it. Even what the Holy One, Blessed be He, gave me—this problem—it is for the best, and no one will have any problem.

And if, Heaven forbid, there is some issue, **it is all from Him, Blessed be He.** "In your place you will be seated"; no one will take anything from you, and no one can touch what is prepared for his fellow by even a hair's breadth. What is coming to you, you will receive. Where you need to sit, you will sit—that is how the world goes. The main thing is that we know only to love and to bring close, and **this is what will build our Holy and Beautiful Temple.**

Sleep on It for a Night

Therefore, in the home first of all, a person with his wife, with his children, **should always speak with them about love**, about brotherhood, about peace. And many times within the family and among friends, there are problems—it is not simple. Because you live together, live life together, and sometimes there are misunderstandings. But a person should think about everything. How did the wise man say? **Sleep on it for one night**, do not react immediately, wait. And everything should be in love. And thus you will see that **all the problems are resolved**, and this is the absolute truth. Everything gently and calmly. May Hashem give us these strengths.

And do not forget **to weep every afternoon over the destruction of our Holy Temple**, and also every night to weep over the destruction of the Holy Temple.

The Upcoming Days of Commemoration (Hillula)

With the help of Hashem, Blessed be He, this Wednesday is **the anniversary of the passing (Yahrzeit) of Aharon the Priest**. And first of all, Tuesday, Erev (the day before) Rosh Chodesh Av, whoever is able to fast—it is very good—to read the entire book of Psalms, to weep and supplicate to our Father in Heaven that He build our Holy and Beautiful Temple for us. And afterward, with the help of Hashem, Blessed be He, Rosh Chodesh should be in love, brotherhood, peace, and fellowship.

And the coming Sunday, is the passing of our master the Ari; we will observe it beforehand. And the 29th day [of Tammuz], Erev (the day before) Rosh Chodesh, is the passing of Rashi—**Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki**, the likes of whom there is none in the world, something extraordinary in the world. Is there any such thing as Rashi? **He was something without equal.** I did not pay attention to speak about him, but his merit should protect us, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki son of Yitzchak. His father merited him **because he strongly loved Hashem, May He be Blessed.** He yielded on a certain precious pearl [refusing to sell it for an idolatrous ornament]; the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: "You yielded on this so they would not place it as an eye for an idol—**you shall receive a son the likes of whom there is none in the world.**"

You know, when his mother was pregnant with him, [some gentiles] wanted to trample her. **She pressed herself against a wall**, and from Heaven they made a 'niche' for her, **and she entered into the opening in the wall.** Thus, to this day they say this place exists. Have you seen it, Rabbi Abraham? In France. You have not been to France? So, to this day, there is that place in France where the mother of Rashi entered. See what miracles and wonders. When the Holy One, Blessed be He, **needs to bring a soul**—He brings it, and no one can interfere, no one can stop it.

May the merit of the Torah protect us, with the help of Hashem. May we merit to raise the Divine Presence (*Shechinah*) from the dust, to cause gratification to our Creator, and to do the will of our Creator with the help of Hashem. May Hashem assist us for the sake of the glory of His name. And we shall see, if we do everything possible, now on the Erev Rosh Chodesh, to repent, to walk in the way of Hashem, to cry out to our Creator, in love, brotherhood, peace, and fellowship—together **we can pull the wagon out of the mud.** With the help of Hashem, we will raise the Shechinah from the dust and there will be a great salvation, with the help of the Almighty and His salvation.

May Hashem merit us to serve Him and to fear Him, and with the help of Hashem, may there be joy and salvation in every home. We bless all the listeners via the satellite, via the telephone, via the radio channels "Radio Moreshet" and "Radio HaDarom", and those who study from the newsletter, and everyone, with the help of Hashem.

May the King of the Universe bless you and merit you, that we should be in love, brotherhood, peace, fellowship, and great salvation, with a good, long, healthy, and happy life. **And so may it be His will, and let us say, Amen.**