



From the desk of  
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## Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

Religious Court of Elad \* Batei Hora'ah \* Religious Services \* Marriage Licensing \* Kashrut \* Mikvaot \* Eiruvim

### TORAT

### Parashat Bechukotai

### HAMELECH

#### Gift of Peace

“If you follow in My statutes... I shall place peace in the land...”

Rashi comments: Even after giving you food and drink, without peace, it is worthless... peace is equivalent to everything, as the verse says (Yeshaya 45), “He makes peace and [thereby] creates everything.” [The pasuk actually says “*oseh shalom uvorei ra*” – Hashem makes peace and creates evil. Rashi here is quoting the way that we say it in *tefillat Shacharit*, based upon Gm. Berachot 11b.]

Ibn Ezra explains this verse, “And I will establish peace in the land” to mean that there will be peace amongst you – internal peace in Klal Yisroel. Ramban expounds: When Klal Yisroel in Eretz Yisroel follow the Torah and keep the mitzvot, animals will not attack people. Animals were not given permission to attack people until after Adam sinned.

Ohr HaChayim also concurs that the peace which is mentioned in this *pasuk* refers to unity and brotherhood within Klal Yisroel.

#### When Hashem is Pleased

The *pasuk* in Mishlei (16:7) says: When Hashem is pleased with a man’s ways, also his enemies will make peace with him. Rabbeinu Yonah

brings, as an example of this, the phenomenon that Avimelech came to make peace with Avraham and Yitzchak. Avimelech said that Hashem was with them and helping them prosper. That is what aroused him to seek their friendship.

Ralbag (ad loc) says that when Hashem is pleased with a person’s ways, He will remove all obstacles and possible harm from his path, including human adversaries. Certainly, He will not allow any new opponents to start up with this person.

Avudraham explains that this is alluded to in our *Shemoneh Esrei*. Every day we pray for intellect, repentance and forgiveness. Those three help us become people with whom Hashem is pleased. Then we pray for salvation and redemption, in line with the above verse that once a person finds favor in Hashem’s Eyes, Hashem will see to it that his adversaries are no longer interested in seeking to harm him. It is a person’s sins which make him loathed by people.

From all of this we see that if a person senses opposition that could be indicative of a flaw in his character or a shortcoming in his service of Hashem. In fact Tikunei Zohar (105b) says that a person who exerts effort in service of his Master will receive assistance by all other creatures. All of creation was only created to assist such a person



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in his mission. Even angels were only created in order to help him.

### Achieving Forgiveness

Sefer Toldot Odom tells a story of Reb Zelmele, brother of Reb Chaim of Volozhin. Reb Zelmele was a great Talmid Chacham and *matmid*. One time, an ignoramus approached Reb Zelmele and started to explain a *mishna* in a very distorted way. Reb Zelmele told him that he is all mixed up. The man got insulted and walked away.

A bit later, Reb Zelmele felt bad for having said hurtful words instead of trying to teach the man the right explanation. Reb Zelmele proceeded to go from shul to shul seeking out the man in order to apologize and ask for forgiveness. But, alas, the man was nowhere to be found.

Exasperated, Reb Zelmele made his way to his revered rebbi, the Vilna Gaon to tell him what had happened. The Gaon told him that when a person does everything in his ability to do things right, Hashem gives him assistance to accomplish that which he can not accomplish on his own. Also in reference to this very topic of achieving forgiveness, Sefer Chovot HaLevavot (Teshuva, chap. 10) says that one who wronged another and later regrets what he did, and sincerely desires to repent and achieve forgiveness, Hashem will arouse the other fellow to forgive him. This is also included in the aforementioned

verse, "When Hashem is pleased with the ways of a man, also his enemies will make peace with him."

At this, Reb Zelmele was comforted.

### If HE Likes You, So Will They

Chid"ra states that a person's *shalom bayit* reflects his religious behavior. He quotes the verse (Tehillim 38:4): There is no peace in my bones due to my sins. We are told in Parashat Bereishit that the very first woman was created from a bone of the first man. She then became his wife. Thus, the "bone" in this verse as well could refer to a wife. The Psalmist is lamenting his lack of friendship with his wife and attributing it to his failings in mitzvah observance.

This is a lesson for one and all, a red light alert which is not to be ignored. If we perceive a lack of tranquility in the home, we ought to review our general mitzvah observance. Certainly we can start with paying attention to how we have been treating our spouse. But even if that specific area seems to pass inspection, we must realize that failing to follow the Torah's rules in all areas of life can also be a direct catalyst to strife in the home.

Chovot HaLevavot also implies (in Shaar Yichud Hama'aseh, chapter 5) that "peace in the home is directly dependent upon one's fulfillment of



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Torah and mitzvot." He quotes a *chacham* who told his son: My son, you can't go out and make everyone happy. It's an impossible task, so just do your utmost to make Hashem pleased with you. Automatically, people will be pleased with you as well. Hashem can plant love and admiration in people's hearts, and praise upon their lips.

### Why Did He Die

The Arizal was a relatively young man when he received a message from Heaven that he was wanted there. He gathered his students together and told them about the message and added that for as long as the *talmidim* live together in harmony, their rebbi will remain in their midst.

Well, everything went fine for about five months. Then, one Erev Shabbat, a disagreement arose between two wives of *talmidim* and it led to a quarrel and eventually a feud between the families. This chain of events erupted quite rapidly, and that very Friday, after the evening services, the Arizal's complexion had taken a terrible change for the worse. He told his star pupil, Reb Chaim Vital that he had been informed that his time had come. The *machloket* which had erupted had sealed his verdict.

Reb Chaim Vital went from shul to shul to arouse the congregants to heartfelt prayers for the Arizal's recovery, but to no avail. The Arizal's parting message to his *talmidim* was to always

respect each other and work on maintaining peace.

### There's Something Better Than Steak

We see that peace is so important, on all fronts. Shlomo Hamelech teaches (Mishlei 15:17): Better a meager meal of vegetables in a loving atmosphere than dining upon fattened oxen with hatred there. And again (ibid. 17:1): Better dry bread and tranquility than a house full of meat and discord.

Anyone who thinks that they can achieve peace and harmony while trampling upon Torah and *mitzvot* is making a big mistake. Our *parashah* teaches us clearly that it takes *Im Bechukotai teleichu* to get to *Venatati Shalom ba'aretz*.

We cannot point fingers at others. We must work first on ourselves. If we improve our act, others will be impressed and follow suit. Let us try hard to do what Hashem wants of us and then all of those who ridicule us and taunt us will turn into our staunch supporters! Hashem searched far and wide for a container for all our blessings and the only suitable candidate was Peace.

May Hashem bless His Nation with peace and spread His Tabernacle of Peace upon us, speedily in our days. Amein

**Shabbat Shalom and Chodesh Tov,**  
**Mordechai Malka**