

The Twelve Pesukim

From sichos that the Rebbe said on the first day of Rosh Chodesh Iyar, and the 13th of Tammuz 5736. In them, the Rebbe explained at length the meaning of the Twelve Pesukim and their ability to “stop the enemies” of the Jews.

As we've discussed many times before, one of the best ways for a person to “tip” themselves—and the entire world—to the side of merit is through the Jewish children. As the pasuk says, “**מִפְּעָלָיִם עֲוָלָלִים וַיַּנְקִים יָסַדְתָּ עָז...לְהַשְׁבִּית אֹוֵב וּמַתְנָקֵם**”—from the mouths of children and babies You have established strength... to stop the enemies and those who take revenge.” This pasuk doesn't just mean that the children have the power to “stop” the enemies that already exist; it also includes “stopping” the enemies *before* their hatred even has a chance to become a problem.

What special connection do the Jewish children have with putting an end to the enemies of Bnei Yisroel?

If you look closely, the pasuk specifically uses the word “stop” (**לְהַשְׁבִּית**), which can have several meanings.

We find a similar discussion in the teachings of Chazal, who explain the pasuk “**מְזֻמָּר שִׁיר לַיּוֹם הַשְׁבָּת**”¹—a song for the day of Shabbos,” which refers to Moshiach. Some explain that Hashem will “stop” (**מְשֻׁבֵּית**) harmful things from existing in the world when Moshiach comes, meaning He will destroy them. Others say that Hashem will only “stop them” (**מְשֻׁבֵּיתן**) so that they won't cause harm. This is also supported in another passuk about

Moshiach: “**לֹא יְרֻעָה וְלֹא יְשַׁחַדְתּוּ**”—they [the dangerous animals] won’t harm or destroy.”

In his notes, the Tzemach Tzedek explains that these two opinions reflect two ways of serving Hashem. There is “pushing away” and destroying the bad (**אֶתכְפִּיאָה**) and “turning over” the bad itself, making it good (**אֶתהְפְּכָא**).

The most complete form of “turning over” the bad will happen when Moshiach comes, when we will experience “**יֹם שְׁכּוֹלָה שְׁבָת וּמִנּוֹחָה לְחֵי הָעוֹלָמִים**”—the day that is entirely Shabbos and restfulness, forever.”

The Tzemach Tzedek also tells us that a miniature version of this peace and restfulness exists every Shabbos. The spiritual concept of Shabbos itself is able to “turn over” some of the darkness in this world and make it light.

From this we can understand that the same can be true even on weekdays, whenever a Jew connects himself with Torah and mitzvos. At that moment, a Jew is lifted above the world, experiencing the same feeling that they do on Shabbos—a feeling of restfulness and peace, as if “all work is done” and there is nothing to worry about (as the sefarim of Mussar, Chassidus, and Kabbalah explain).

The Gemara tells us, the breath of children is “breath that has no sin.” That’s what gives them the ability to “stop” the enemies and those who take revenge”.

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Therefore this concept of “Shabbos” applies even more to the Torah learning and mitzvos that the children do.

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Because of this special ability that the children have, it is suggested that they get involved in the campaigns—especially mitzah chinuch—to ensure that the “enemies” we face nowadays will be “ended” in the most complete way.

Meaning that as soon as children become old enough to be able to have an understanding in Torah and mitzvos, they should immediately begin educating others.

This is similar to what we discussed regarding Shabbos candles: as soon as a Jewish girl becomes old enough to understand the idea of Shabbos and lighting candles, it’s very important to have her immediately begin lighting Shabbos and Yom Tov candles herself, accompanied by a full brachah and giving tzedakah before lighting, as is the minhag.

When we make an effort—even a minor one—to involve young boys and girls in mitzah chinuch, we will certainly be successful. Children, by nature, become friends with other children of the same age (or slightly older or younger). By nature, a child also likes showing their friends that they have some kind of advantage over them, something that allows them to “rule over” the others. We need to take advantage of this natural tendency and use it for holy things. We can explain to

the children that when they meet their friends—whether in school, at home, or even on the street—they can use the opportunity to share something related to Torah and mitzvos with them, and something about Yiddishkeit that they are able to relate to.

A child needs to be taught that whenever they know something in Torah—whether it's Torah Shebichsav or Torah Shebaal Peh—that their friends don't yet know, they need to teach it to them.

Since “jealousy among Torah scholars increases wisdom,” the second child will be motivated to want to do the same thing—teach their friends, learn with them, and explain to them the concepts in Torah that they don't know.

By nature, a child also likes showing their friends that they have some kind of advantage over them. We need to use this natural tendency for holiness

As we said, even a small effort in this direction will be very successful. The children will get involved with energy, as is the nature of children—whatever they do, they get very excited and emotionally invested in it , which has the advantage that they will do this without any limitations.

When we teach our children to throw themselves into Torah and mitzvos in an unlimited way, it ensures that “גַם כִּי יִזְקִין לֹא יִסּוּר מִמְנָה”—even when they get older, they keep the ability to go out of their boundaries and dedicate themselves to Torah in an unlimited way.

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Educating others starts with educating yourself.

The true concept of chinuch is teaching a way of life. In other words, the things you're teaching can't just be relevant to one specific time—they need to be *constant*. We see this practiced in actuality by true educators. They aren't only interested in making sure that their student has a lot of knowledge; they teach them how to behave, so that it should be noticeable in the way they eat, sleep and walk—along with all the other things that the Rambam describes as the mark of a chacham.

Now, although the Rambam says this about the behavior of a chacham, it's easy to understand that

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these same behaviors are important for the education of a small child, too, as soon as they are old enough to be educated in even the most basic ways. Because a true educator, as we said, cares about how their children and students act every second of the day.

This begins with Torah, which is “חַיָּנוּ וְאָוֶרֶךְ יִמְינֵנוּ”—our life, and the length of our days.” Torah isn't just knowledge or wisdom; it's our *life*. Therefore, learning Torah properly has an effect on our entire lifestyle. (As we mentioned before in the name of the Rambam, someone who learns Torah acts differently in every aspect of their life.)

Since Torah is the life of every Jew, even young children, it is suggested that the children review by heart various pesukim from Torah Shebichsav (those which

Halachah allows us to say by heart), teachings of Chazal from Torah Shebaal Peh, and also portions of Chassidus.

The children should be taught to review these selections out loud—or think them in their minds—whenever they have a free moment in their day and also to teach them to their friends.

When these Torah concepts are engraved in their memories, the children can achieve, in their own way, the level of “תורתו אומנתו”—someone whose life is entirely focused on Torah. When they “sit in their homes, walk on the road, when they lie down get up,” and even when they play with their friends—they will suddenly find themselves remembering a pasuk in Torah or a concept in Tanya.

This merit is even more tremendous according to what the Alter Rebbe explains in Likkutei Torah (in the maamer “זהירות פניע זקן”), that when someone knows a portion of Torah Shebaal Peh by heart, it remains in his brain’s memory at all times. Even when they are involved in something else, the Torah concept they know is completely retained in their mind. (This is why our Rabbeim said many tremendously wondrous things about this maamer, as explained in many sichos.)

The intention here is not that the children should just repeat words that they don’t understand. The intention is to select certain concepts in Torah Shebichsav and Torah Shebaal Peh, that can be explained even to a

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very young child, so that they can actually grasp the meaning of what they're saying. This way, the lesson of the pasuk reaches them and affects them, until they live with its message, that even between one game and the next, for instance, they will remember the Torah concept and teach it to their friends.

In fact, even a concept in Chassidus—a section of Tanya, for example—can be explained to a young child until they actually understand it on their level. As the Zohar clearly says, at the end (starting from the six-hundredth year) of the sixth thousand year period of the world's history, right before the coming of Moshiach, all the wellsprings of wisdom will open up. At that time,

The intention here is to select certain concepts in Torah that can be explained even to very young children, so that they can actually grasp the meaning of the pasuk they're saying and live with its message

even "the children of the world" will involve themselves in Pnimius Hatorah. This will be a preparation for Moshiach, when "the knowledge of Hashem will fill the world, just like the water fills the sea."

This "knowledge of Hashem" will be understood by children, too. (As the pasuk says, "they will all know Me, from the youngest to the oldest.")

Even though the children understand these ideas in their own "childish terms," they still contain the truth and the heart of the concept—including all of the 600,000 explanations that exist for every idea in the Torah (as explained in the writings of the Arizal).

As we've discussed many times before: explaining something—like faith in Hashem, for instance—to a child in their own words doesn't mean that we're telling the child something which is not true, chas veshalom. It's the same Torah—*תורת אמת*, "the true Torah"—that an adult would learn; it's just being given over in terms that a child can relate to. This is similar to what the Gemara says: "the Torah speaks in a language that people can understand." In our case, we need to speak in a language that children can understand when we explain these subjects to them. At the same time, the deeper explanation—including the way Kabbalah and Chassidus explain these matters—is still contained within the simple words we tell the children.

The Zohar clearly says that before the coming of Moshiach, even young children will involve themselves in Pnimius Hatorah

This is especially true when we consider the famous saying of the Frierdiker Rebbe, that even when a person learns something that they—meaning their neshamah as it is in the body—don't understand, when they go up to the Torah for an aliyah all the levels of his soul "rise up." (In the sichah, the Frierdiker Rebbe was talking about how special getting an aliyah is.) The neshamah level of "רוּח" ("spirit") is lifted to the spiritual world of Yetzirah, and so on with the other four neshamah levels, all the way up to "יחידה," the part of the neshamah which is always "one" with Hashem, which rises to the highest, most infinite spiritual worlds, and there they [the levels of the neshamah] are able to understand what he learned.

The same is true when it comes to teaching children. Even if they don't necessarily understand the deeper message right away, it still stays in their neshamah and makes an impression.

Recently, even the non-Jewish experts have agreed—though they make it sound as if it's their *own* innovative approach—that whatever happens to a child when they are newly born leave an impression that lingers and has an effect even when they are older.

This "recent discovery" that modern medicine has just made was already written in the Torah of the Jewish people and incorporated into our minhagim very long ago.

The minhag is that as soon as a child is born, we place a "Shir Hamaalos" card in front of them. Similarly, there's also a minhag to lull newborn children to sleep with the words "תורה איז די בעסטע סחורה"—Torah is the best merchandise," sung in a soulful tune. This was adopted by, in the words of the seforim, the "elderly women of Yisroel" and the "young women as well" throughout the generations. The reason for all this is, as we said, because things that a child experiences in their infancy—even though they don't understand them at the time—leave an impression that affects them even when they are older.

This also explains the words of Pirkei Avos: "רבי" "יהושע בן חנניה אשרי יולדו"—fortunate is the one who gave birth to R' Yehoshua ben Chananya."

R' Yehoshua ben Chananya's mother
³²⁴
began his chinuch as soon as he was born, while

The Mishnah praises R' Yehoshua ben

Chananya's mother, who would take him—while he was still a baby in the carriage—to the Shuls and Batei Midrashos. This had an effect on him, and he grew up to be one of the greatest Tannaim. This is the meaning of "אשר יולדתו", his whole greatness came from the chinuch he received as soon as he was born, when he was still laying in the crib.

If this is true of a newborn baby, it certainly applies to a child who is already old enough to be educated and to understand things. When we explain an idea in Tanya to this child in a way that they can understand, it definitely has an effect on them—an effect that stays even when they get older.

Because of this, it is my request that children review by heart the following two pesukim from Torah Shebichsav, two maamarei Chazal from Torah Shebaal Peh, and two sayings of the Alter Rebbe from Tanya. The meaning of these pesukim and maamarim should be explained to the children as well, in words that they can understand and take a practical lesson from.

Torah Shebichsav

1. **תורה צוה לנו משה מورשה קהילת יעקב**—Moshe commanded us the Torah, as an inheritance for the nation of Yaakov.

Chazal tell us that when a child begins speaking, their father should teach them this

**We need to explain
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pasuk. From this it's understood that this pasuk is meant to be the beginning of a child's education.

Even a small child needs to know that the entire Torah is given to them as an inheritance ("מורשה"). We need to explain the preciousness of Torah to them, that they ought to treasure their Torah inheritance and hold it dear, just as they treasure and feel attached to toys and other belongings.

2. **שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל הָאֱלֹהֵינוּ הָאֶחָד**—Hear, Yisroel: Hashem is our G-d, Hashem is One.

This pasuk needs to be already introduced to children. As early in their lives as possible, children should be taught to say Shema during the day and at night (if not the entire paragraph, at least the first pasuk).

And the “א” represents Hashem, the Master of the world (“אלוף העולם”). By putting these three letters together, we indicate that Hashem is in control of the entire world, including the seven heavens and the earth, in all four directions

We can also explain the meaning of the words to children just as we would to an adult (using words the child can understand). The word "אחד"—one" is made up of three letters, which symbolize different things (as explained in the Beis Yosef, and at greater length in the seforim of Jewish philosophy, Chassidus, and Kabbalah).

The "נ," symbolizes the seven heavens and the earth (adding up to eight, the numerical value of "נ").

The "ת" corresponds to the four directions.

Furthermore, just as the letter “א” is the start of the word “אַחַת,” the seven heavens, the earth, and the four directions all come from Hashem.

We need to explain this to children according to their own understanding. After all, they also see the sky, the earth, and the four directions. They should know that “Hashem is One,” and that He controls the entire world.

When we thoroughly explain these concepts to the children in a way that they can understand, it will bring the practical result of “וְאֶחָבָת אֶת הָאֱלֹהִים.” They will develop a love for Hashem in their hearts (just as an adult is expected to, when they think about Hashem’s oneness and power).

Torah Shebaal Peh:

Torah Shebaal Peh contains many things that can be explained to children. My request is that the following two sayings of Chazal, which have a special relevance to children and to our times, be reviewed with them.

3. **—בְּכָל דָּור חַיֵּב אָדָם לְרֹאֹת אֶת עַצְמוֹ כְּאֵלָיו הוּא יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרָיִם—**

In every generation, a person must see himself as if he [actually] left Mitzrayim.

Yetzias Mitzrayim is something that a Jew needs to constantly remember. As the pasuk says, “you should remember the day you left Mitzrayim for all the days you live.” Therefore it is certainly fitting to learn this maamer Chazal, which speaks about Yetzias Mitzrayim, with children.

Yetzias Mitzrayim is especially connected with children, because it's one of the subjects that children need to be specifically taught about. We see this on the Seder night, when we read about the "four sons." We need to have all four types of children, not just the wise son, at the table, and we do various things to arouse their curiosity and prompt them to ask questions. After all, the Torah specifically instructs us to "tell our children" ("וְהִגְדַּת לְבָנֶךָ") about the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

This "chinuch" that we do at the Seder needs to serve as a preparation for the rest of the year, to continue teaching our children this way.

This specific maamer Chazal teaches us that we need to imagine that Hashem Himself is taking us out of

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Mitzrayim. This can be explained to a child very simply. As we say in the Haggadah, "If Hashem hadn't taken out our fathers from Mitzrayim, we... would still be slaves." Even a child can easily understand how, in effect, Hashem took *us* out of Mitzrayim, not just our ancestors.

This immediately leads to a practical result: the child will be moved to do everything Hashem wants, out of gratitude for the One who did such a tremendous kindness by taking him out of Mitzrayim!

4. **כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא שנאמר ועמך כולם צדיקים לעולם ירשו ארץ נצਰ מטעי מעשה ידי להתפאר**
Every Jew has a portion in Olam Haba. As it is said: your nation are all tzadikim, they will inherit the

land forever; they are the branch that I planted, the work of My hands that I take pride in.

The Alter Rebbe writes in his Siddur: “There is a minhag to say one perek of Pirkei Avos every Shabbos between Pesach and Shavuos, and to say the mishnah of ‘כל ישראַל’ beforehand... there are those who [continue] this minhag throughout the summer Shabbosos as well.”

As the Alter Rebbe mentions, there are different minhagim. But all opinions agree that Pirkei Avos are learned during the weeks of Sefiras Haomer and that we preface them with the maamer Chazal describing how “every Jew”—even a young child—“has a portion in Olam Haba.”

This is another concept that can be explained to even very young children.

Every child needs to know that they are the “work of Hashem’s hands that He takes pride in.” Even a child understands that, no matter how great their physical parents are, Hashem—their “Father in heaven”—is much greater, and he has the merit to be the “pride” of Hashem, and the “work of His hands!”

Because of this, as the maamer Chazal explains, he has a “portion in Olam Haba,” the eternal world to come. By connecting themselves with Hashem, the child realizes that they too can become eternal!

Every child needs to know that they have the merit of being “the work of Hashem’s hands that He takes pride in”

And, as we said, this is an explanation that very small children—even one who has just become capable of understanding concepts—can relate to.

This leads to the practical application of the idea:

When we explain to children that if they behave well, they will merit to sit together with all the towering leaders of the Jewish people in Olam Habah. On the other hand, if their behavior is lacking, they will have to sit shamefacedly together with all the other children who didn't act properly—and moreover, this will be for *eternity*, since Olam Haba is not a temporary thing.

It's easy to understand how effectively this will encourage the child to behave well, with excitement and enthusiasm—in Torah learning, keeping

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of mitzvos, and in all aspects of Jewishness, including honoring their parents.

Tanya:

5. כי קרוב אליך הדבר מאד בפייך ובלבבך—*This thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to do it.*

On the title page of Tanya, the Alter Rebbe writes that the Tanya is based on this pasuk, "to explain clearly how it is very close." (The Frierdiker Rebbe explains that this page is really the "title page" of the Alter Rebbe's approach in general.)

The Torah tells us that Jewishness is very close to us, meaning it's very easy for us to fulfill—not just in action, but “in our hearts.” And this pasuk is meant to be taken literally, by every Jew everywhere and at all times, because “the Torah is eternal.”

This is what we need to explain to young children: Even though your “heart” might want physical things—a toy, a game, and so on—you need to know that it is “very close to you” to do the right thing! If you would only think about the preciousness of Yiddishkeit, Torah and mitzvos, you would immediately want them very much.

וְהִנֵּה הִנֵּצֶב עַלְיוֹ וּמְלָא כָּל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדָו וּמִבֵּית עַלְיוֹ וּבָוחָן 6. —Hashem is standing over him, and the whole world is full of His glory. Hashem looks at him, and examines his mind and his heart, to see if he is serving Him properly.

In the beginning of the forty-first perek of Tanya, the Alter Rebbe says that Hashem is “standing over” every Jew and “examines his mind and his heart, to see whether he’s serving Him properly.”

By using the wording “**נִצֶּב עַלְיוֹ**”—standing over him,” the Alter Rebbe hints to something incredible.

The Midrash on the pasuk “**וְהִנֵּה הִנֵּצֶב עַלְיוֹ**,” talking about Yaakov Avinu, explains that Hashem actually “stood” over Yaakov like a rider on a chariot.

This is what we need to explain to young children: Even though your “heart” might want physical things—a toy, a game, or so on—you need to know that it is “very near to you” to choose the right thing!

By using these words the Alter Rebbe implies that, incredibly, Hashem “stands” in this same way over *every* Jew, no matter what level! Hashem “depends” on every Jew, so to speak, and “relies” on their behavior and the innermost feelings of their “mind and heart.”

Furthermore, the word “**נִצְבֵּה**” is also related to the pasuk “**לְנִצְבֵּה מֶלֶךְ**”—a governor stands in as king.” In other words, Hashem’s “kingship” actually depends on the behavior of every Jew!

This concept can also be explained—if we only spend some time thinking about it—even to a very young child according to his own understanding (using examples from physical things, and so on).

As we said before, even the part that a child doesn’t understand is understood by their neshamah. Even if a child only grasps the most simple level with “childish words” that are clothed in the nefesh habahamis’ understanding, their neshamah relates to the deeper dimensions as well.

**Every Jew needs
to realize that
Hashem “depends”
on them, so to
speak, and “relies”
on their behavior**

This is especially true if the ones explaining it are their parents who care deeply about their child’s chinuch. The parents will certainly figure out a way to convey these concepts to all of their children—according to each one’s understanding—while still retaining the soul of the idea and will do this in a way that will have a positive effect on their children’s daily lives.

As mentioned earlier (א סעיף), when we involve children in mitzah chinuch—both their own chinuch and the chinuch of other children, then they will bring to the table the special strength that Hashem “established” in “the mouths of children and babies,” which is “breath that has no sin”—which, as the Alter Rebbe explains in Tanya, is present even if a child only learns because of their fear of punishment.

This is similar to the idea we find regarding adults. In certain cases, Halachah mandates a person to be whipped until they say that they want to follow Halachah (כופין אותו עד שאומר רוצה אני—“We force him until he says ‘I want’.”) As the Rambam explains, a Jew’s neshamah *truly* wants to do what the Torah says, even if it seems from the outside that the agreement is forced.

If this is the case regarding an adult, it’s definitely true regarding children, whose breath has no sin, that even if it seems like a child is only learning because of their fear of punishment, on the inside they are doing it sincerely.

On the contrary: the Halachah is that while a child’s ability to have the right intentions isn’t considered significant, and sometimes their speech is also not considered significant but their actions are. Meaning that a child’s intention while learning isn’t important according to Halachah, his action is what counts. So

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whether a child is learning because they enjoy it or out of fear, it doesn't matter, the action is what counts.

When children learn and teach Torah, they have the strength ("עוֹז") that Hashem established in them. They form the foundation of Torah, which is also called "עוֹלָם." In addition, their learning also brings "strength" in the literal sense—it causes the Jewish people to stand strong and not be affected by the other nations and their schemes.

When Haman Harashah described the Jewish nation to Achashverosh, he said that, "There is ("שָׁנוּ") one nation, scattered and dispersed among the other nations...and they don't obey the king's laws." On a deeper level this means, that even while the Jews are in galus, "scattered among the nations," they are "one nation", and a powerful nationl. (The word "שָׁנוּ" implies something firm and strong), because "they don't fulfill the king's laws" that go against the laws of Hashem, the King of kings.

The Jewish children also have a positive effect on their parents, and cause them—like Mordechai Hatzadik—to "not kneel or bow" in front of the "Hamans" of today. Then, as we read at the end of the Megillah, the result is that "the fear of the Jews will fall" upon the other nations, and the Jewish people's fame will "spread throughout all the countries," and they will have "light, joy, happiness and

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glory”—both literally, and in the deeper sense explained by Chazal.

From this redemption, which takes place during the very last days of galus, we will go to the next and ultimate redemption with Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

The final redemption will be both a spiritual geulah—when every Jew will do teshuvah—and, most importantly, a physical one. It will be a redemption from the darkness of this bitter galus. The Jewish people will go “with upraised hands” to welcome Moshiach Tzidkeinu, who will build the Beis Hamikdash, gather the Jews from across the world, and show everyone that Hashem is the true King—may it be speedily in our days!

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From a sicha said during the Lag Baomer Parade, 5736:

In continuation to the recent request that children learn portions of Torah Shebichsav, Torah Shebaal Peh, and Pnimius Hatorah by heart and “carve” them into their memory so that they can constantly review them no matter where they are (even when they aren't near a sefer to look into), it would be appropriate to add, in addition to the previously suggested six pesukim and maamarei Chazal, another two pesukim, two maamarei Chazal, and two teachings of the Alter Rebbe from the thirty-third perek of Tanya.

The following six pesukim and maamarei Chazal, which have a direct relevance to a one's daily life and behavior, are being requested:

7. In בראשית ברא אלקים את השמים ואת הארץ—In the beginning, Hashem created the heavens and the earth.

This is the first pasuk in Torah Shebichsav, and it speaks about how Hashem created the entire world—the heavens, the earth, and everything in them.

This has a direct connection with a one's day-to-day behavior. When a small boy or girl—or, for that matter, an adult—sees the big world around them, it's possible to feel scared. The world is full of things that aren't as they should be. In the words of the Gemara, it's an “עולם שטם”—a desolate world!”

This pasuk reminds us that there is Someone in control of this world Who created it all—Hashem, and

Hashem gave the Jews the Torah, with which we can lead the world and change “the earth”—meaning all the things that are in this physical world—for the better. In addition, we can have an effect on “the heavens,” too, and cause Hashem to give us brachos and success.

When a child—or, for that matter, an adult—sees the big world around them, it's possible to feel scared by all the things that aren't as they should be

8. ושננתם לבניך ודברת בם בשבתך בביתך—And you shall teach to your children, and you should speak about it when you sit in your house, when you travel, when you go to sleep and when you wake up.

This pasuk comes as a continuation to the pasuk of Shema Yisroel. The Torah commands parents to learn Torah “with their children”—which refers to students as well as actual children. In other words, there’s a command to learn Torah with whoever needs to learn a little more.

As the pasuk continues, this learning has to be in a way that we “speak about it when we sit in our house, when we travel, when we go to sleep, and when we wake up.” The Torah becomes so ingrained in our hearts and minds that we can review it by heart at all times and we go to sleep with Torah and we wake up with Torah.

When children ask their parents—wholeheartedly, as children do—to send them to summer camps that have a Torah spirit and atmosphere, and are run according to Torah’s instructions, they will certainly agree. The same is true during the school year, too. If the children truly want to, their parents will certainly agree to enroll them in a school that teaches them about Torah, mitzvos, and Jewishness.

The Torah is so ingrained in our hearts that we “speak about it when we sit in our house, when we travel, when we go to sleep and when we wake up”

יגעת ולא מצאתי אל תאמין, לא יגעתי ומצאתי אל תאמין, 9. —[If someone tells you] ‘I worked hard, but I did not succeed,’ don’t believe him; [if someone tells you] ‘I didn’t work hard, but I succeeded,’ don’t believe him; [but if someone tells you] ‘I worked hard, and I succeeded,’ believe him.

When a child thinks over their past and realizes that there was a time in their life when they acted improperly, it shouldn't cause them to feel despair, and it shouldn't chas veshalom weaken their Torah learning or keeping of mitzvos.

He might not understand how this could be possible. "There was a time when I actually fell through. How can I continue serving Hashem with my full strength if I did something like that?!"

If he reviews this maamer Chazal, though, his question would be answered. If someone can't muster

If someone can't muster up the strength to behave the way they should according to the laws of the Torah, it's a sure sign that they weren't trying hard enough

up the strength to behave the way they should according to the laws of the Torah, it's a sure sign that they weren't trying hard enough. If a child would try with all their might, they would definitely have been—and still can be—successful, as the last part of the maamer Chazal describes.

ואהבת לרעך כמוך—רבי עקיבא אומר זה—'כלל גדול בתורה' 10. 'Love your friend as you

love yourself'; Rabbi Akivah says that this is a basic principle of Torah.

As we've discussed before, it isn't enough for us to improve our own behavior. We also need to involve ourselves with our friends, our surroundings, and the atmosphere around us and change them all for the better. This pasuk tells us that we need to do this with

the same wholeheartedness and dedication we use when we're improving ourselves.

Rabbi Akivah adds that this idea of loving your friends—and everyone around you—just as you love yourself is a very important, basic rule of the Torah, .

From this we can understand that the “hard work” spoken about in the previous maamer Chazal—referring to a person’s *own* Avodah—must also be applied to helping those around them.

זה כל האדם ותכלית בראיתו ובריאת כל העולמות עליונים 11. ותחתונים להיות לו דירה זו מתחתונים—This is the entire [goal] of a person, and the purpose of his creation, and of all the worlds being created: to make a dwelling place for Him in the lowest worlds.

A child needs to know that learning Torah, doing mitzvos, and influencing others positively are the greatest shlichus a Jew could have.

As the Alter Rebbe writes in the thirty-third perek of Tanya—which is also worth learning by heart—the “purpose of a person being created,” and the purpose of “all the worlds being created,” is to create a dwelling place for Hashem in this world. We do this by living Jewishly, learning Torah, and doing mitzvos.

In other words, the entire reason the world was created is so that every Jew can turn themselves, their homes, and

A child needs to know that learning Torah, doing mitzvos, and influencing others positively are the greatest shlichus a Jew could have

the entire world into a place where Hashem can live, just like a person lives in their own home.

ישמח ישראל בעושיו, פירוש, שכל מי שהוא מזרע ישראל יש לו לשמחה בשמחה ה' אשר שש ושמחה בדירתו בתהтонים
 'Rejoice, Yisroel, in your Maker.' This means that everyone who belongs to the Jewish people should rejoice in Hashem's happiness, Who rejoices and is happy in His dwelling place in the lowest world.

In this perek the Alter Rebbe states another general rule, which is also worth reviewing by heart. This mission

that we have—to make the world a dwelling place for Hashem—has to be done joyfully. It shouldn't be carried out as if it's a command we obey without enjoyment. We need to do it with the greatest happiness.

The mission which every Jew has—to make the world a dwelling place for Hashem—has to be done joyfully

If a Jew would only think about this very fact—that Hashem Himself chose each and every Jew to be the ones to make the world into a "dwelling place" for Him—it would bring them tremendous joy, and they would fulfill their mission happily.

Furthermore, the Jewish people rejoice "in their Maker." The joy that they feel isn't their own—they are happy with Hashem's happiness. Every Jew is happy with the joy Hashem has when the Jewish people carry out their shlichus and make their homes and the entire world a dwelling place for Him. (This is done by learning Torah and doing mitzvos).

This is something that every student—whether young in age or in knowledge—needs to know. As the Alter Rebbe says (using carefully worded language), “everyone who belongs to the Jewish people.” This means that no matter where a Jew is holding or how they were educated up until today (or up until this minute)—they have a special shlichus to be extremely happy, knowing that Hashem is rejoicing along with us.

When we are joyful, we are able to carry out the shlichus of making a dwelling place for Hashem with happiness, energy, and excitement. With this kind of approach, we will certainly fulfill our goal even more successfully.

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By ingraining in our minds these two pesukim, two maamarei Chazal, and two sayings of the Alter Rebbe—along with the six that we mentioned earlier—this will light up the way and guide every child in their daily lives and give them more happiness and energy to carry out the mission every Jewish child has - to light up their lives, to light up their surroundings and the entire world with the light of Torah and mitzvos. Through this the world will no longer be a “desolate world.” Instead it will be a world that Hashem can call His “home,” a dwelling place for Him down here.

Everyone has a special shlichus to rejoice in the mission Hashem gave us, knowing that Hashem is rejoicing along with us

————— SUMMARY —————

We finish off the Twelve Pesukim with
a general message about our avodas
Hashem: It should be done joyfully.

When you explain this pasuk to your friends, ask
them to stop for a moment and think about how
incredible it is to be chosen by Hashem Himself for
a special mission. How could we not be ecstatically
happy at having being given such a gift!?

Furthermore, Hashem's happiness itself should
also make us happy. We are His children, His
soldiers—when He is happy, we should feel
His happiness in our own hearts as well.

Details of The Twelve Pesukim

Torah Tzivah

The pasuk of “Torah Tzivah” is the basis and foundation that every Jew’s life is based on, starting from the very moment he is born.

The pasuk speaks about how Moshe Rabbeinu received the Torah at Har Sinai and gave it over—all of it—to every Jew. The Torah is an inheritance for each and every Jew, even very young children. That’s why we begin teaching a child as soon as they begin to speak—while still very small—תורה צוה לנו משה מورשה קהلت יעקב—that “Moshe commanded us the Torah as an inheritance for the nation of Yaakov.”

Just as a person’s inheritance belongs to his children, every Jewish child inherits the entire Torah

Just as a person’s inheritance belongs to his children—no matter if they’re young or old, smart or simple—even if they’re *newborns*—every Jewish child inherits the entire Torah, and it all belongs to them.

This is because every Jew is a child of Hashem. As the pasuk says, “**בְּנִים אַתֶּם לְהִיא אֱלֹקֵיכֶם**”—you are children to Hashem your G-d.” So long as someone is a son or daughter of “the nation of Yaakov,” they receive the entire Torah as an inheritance immediately upon birth, so they can live with it every day and use it to have a truly bright life.

In other words, the entire Torah, with all its commandments, is *theirs*. The lessons in Torah are relevant to *them*, even if they're still children.

The only difference between one Jew and the next is how much they need to "guard" this inheritance and involve themselves with learning Torah.

At five years old, a child begins learning Chumash—following the Mishnah's guidance of "בן חמץ למקרא" בֶן חַמֵץ לְמִקְרָא." Even before then, he already learns Torah pesukim from his parents or older siblings.

Even before that, as soon as a child begins learning to speak we already start teaching them words of Torah.

The only difference between one Jew and the next is how much they need to "guard" this inheritance and involve themselves with learning Torah

them.

And even before that, as soon as he is born, we introduce Torah by hanging pesukim in the baby's room, and when he is being put to bed, he is lulled to sleep with the words "תורה איז די בעסטע סחורה—Torah is the best merchandise" (as is the minhag). This lullaby teaches that Torah is more precious than anything else Hashem created—the heavens, the earth, and everything in

Just as an inheritance is passed down from father to son, so too the Torah is given from one generation to the next, forever. And since Torah is an everlasting inheritance for every Jew, it has an effect on a person's entire life, from childhood to old age. At all stages of life, a Jew remains connected to Torah and mitzvos.

By giving children this chinuch—to behave the way the Torah tells them—when they’re young, it becomes easier for them to act that way for the rest of their lives. As the pasuk says, “**חֲנֹוק לְנָעַר**—educate a child” and teach Torah’s ways while he is still young, because then “**גַם כִּי יִזְקִין לֹא יִסּוּר מִמְנָה**”—even when he becomes old, he will not turn away from it.” For the rest of his life, he will follow the instructions given in Torah, the “Torah of truth.”

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Because every Jewish child inherits the Torah, their avodas Hashem throughout the day is also done in a way of “inheritance.” Meaning, he remains connected to all of Torah and mitzvos with the strongest possible bond.

For example, when a small child wakes up in the morning, the first thing that comes to mind is Hashem! Therefore right away he says Modeh Ani, thanking “the living and eternal King” for giving back his neshamah.

This Modeh Ani is “carved” into him, and for the entire rest of the day, he lives with its message. That whenever he does anything—whether it’s an important matter or even something simple—he clearly understands that everything comes from Hashem, the “the living and eternal King.”

When a small child wakes up in the morning, the first thing that comes to mind is Hashem!

This awareness is so complete that even before taking a sip of water, a child makes the brachah of “**שהכל נהי” בדבורי**.” This brachah thanks Hashem for creating not only the drink of water, and not only the child’s *own* life (mentioned in Modeh Ani), but for creating *everything* that exists!

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This is what a child answers the yetzer hara, who comes and says: “You’re just a small kid, before Bar or Bas Mitzvah! What kind of connection do you have with the Torah?” the yetzer scoffs. “Why is it so important for you to behave the way it tells you to?!”

The child chases the yetzer hara away and doesn’t listen to his arguments, because he knows that from the

very moment he was born, the *entire* Torah became connected with him, and in a way of an “inheritance” as a member of “the nation of Yaakov,” and guides him throughout life.

Since the Torah is “an inheritance for the nation of Yaakov,” we hold it dear—just like we would treasure a precious inheritance!

Knowing this, a child learns Torah with the utmost dedication and energy, with excitement and joy, and also influences his or her friends to learn Torah—their inheritance from Moshe Rabbeinu—as well.

When every Jewish child affects their entire family—and the other Jewish families who live nearby—this way, it will begin to change the *entire* Jewish nation. It will be clear to everyone that the Torah is “an inheritance for

the nation of Yaakov,” and that the Jewish people hold the Torah dear, just like we would treasure a precious inheritance.

Valuing Torah in this way prepares us for the time when the entire Jewish people, the “nation of Yaakov,” will gather together for the true geulah through Moshe Rabbeinu. As the Midrash says, “he was the first redeemer and he will be the final redeemer.” Just as Moshe took us out of Mitzrayim in the past, he will once again have a part in taking Yidden out of *this galus*, together with Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

All the Jewish communities throughout the world—whether in Eretz Yisroel or outside, in other lands—will unite as one big community. And together they will come to our one and only holy land of Eretz Yisroel, with the true and complete geulah speedily in our days!

SUMMARY

When you say the pasuk of Torah Tzivah, you are proclaiming something very important: That the Torah belongs to you, and to every Jewish person. Some people like to think that only smart, learned people get to learn Torah; they act as if the rest of the Jewish nation—especially children—can’t really connect with it properly. The yetzer hara loves this idea, and tries to use it to convince Jewish children that the laws of Torah don’t apply to them, and that it’s not that important for them to follow what Hashem wants.

SPECIAL MISSIONS

The pasuk of Torah Tzivah, however, tells us the exact opposite: Every Jew has a right to learn Torah, and every Jew is obligated to keep its laws! When you think about this pasuk's message, not only will it drive you to keep Torah and mitzvos yourself, but it will also inspire you to teach others—who may never have had the chance to learn—about their special inheritance, Hashem's holy Torah.

Shema Yisroel

One of the ways that Jewish children demonstrate that they are Jews is by saying by heart the pasuk of "Shema Yisroel", with no need to look in a sefer, and with such energy and excitement that it's clear that they live by these words.

This pasuk reminds us constantly that Hashem is "אחד"—the One and only King of the entire world.

In the Chumash, this pasuk is immediately followed by another pasuk: "אהבת את ה' אלקיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך"—And you shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." The meaning of this is:

Hashem loves every Jew, as He says in the Torah, "אהבתני אתכם"—I have loved you," referring to the Jewish people, and especially the Jewish children, as the pasuk tells us, "נער ישראלי"—Yisroel was a child, and I loved him."

So too, the Jewish people—especially the children—love Hashem. And this love, as the pasuk describes, is "with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might," and it fills every detail of their lives. Everything they do, every word they say, and every thought they think is dedicated only to Jewish matters, matters of Torah and mitzvos.

The Jewish people love Hashem "with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their might," and this love fills every detail of their lives

They think about Hashem in everything they do throughout their day—even when they eat and even when they sleep.

Before going to bed we say “Shema Yisroel.” By mentioning Hashem’s name right before going to sleep, we cause the sleep to be a restful and healthy one. And we wake up in the morning healthier and stronger, ready to serve Hashem in an even greater and brighter way than we did the day before.

————— SUMMARY —————

The pasuk of Shema Yisroel sums up a Jewish child’s commitment to Hashem. When a child loudly proclaims it, and shows that he doesn’t need to look inside—he knows it by heart—he demonstrates that this is something real, something that’s part of his life.

As you go through your day, think about how Hashem is “One”—the heavens, the earth, and everything in them are all created by Him every second! This thought will inspire you to serve Hashem at all times—not only when you’re davening or learning, but in everything you do!

Bechol Dor Vador (1)

This pasuk tells us that in every generation—in “בכל דור ודור” (and, as the Alter Rebbe adds, “every day”), “חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו יצא ממצרים”—a person must see himself as if he himself left Mitzrayim.” A Jew needs to *always* remember that we used to be in Mitzrayim, and that Hashem took us out.

What lesson does this teach us in avodas Hashem?

A Jew needs to know that he can't be a slave to the yetzer hara and his not-good feelings, behaving the way the Mitzriim behaved. A Jew needs to act like a “free man,” someone who has been redeemed from Mitzrayim. When the yetzer hara tries to convince us to act like a Mitrzi, we “run away” from the “Mitzrayim” of the yetzer hara, and completely ignore the yetzer’s arguments.

A Jew knows that Hashem took us out of slavery in Egypt and made us truly free by making us His “holy nation,” which has absolutely no connection to Mitzrayim!

So even if, after all, we are still in galus, we can still fully involve ourselves in Torah and mitzvos, ignoring the galus completely. Because a Jew knows that *today*, on this very day, we are going to be redeemed and freed from all the difficulties of galus—both the current galus and the first galus in Mitzrayim.

A Jew can't be a “slave” to the yetzer hara

By remembering how we went out of Mitzrayim and mentioning it every single day, we will merit to have the true and complete geulah with Moshiach Tzidkeinu very soon.

And as Hashem promises, “I will show you wonders like the days you left Mitzrayim.” We will leave this galus miraculously, with even greater wonders than there was during Yetzias Mitzrayim (as the Zohar says), may we merit to see it *now!*

————— SUMMARY —————

Yetzias Mitzrayim isn’t just an event that happened a long time ago—every day, we need to go out of the “Mitzrayim” that the yetzer hara tries to trap us in. He’s constantly scheming to distract us with bad thoughts and foolish arguments—but when we remember that we’re Jews, Hashem’s special nation, who have absolutely no connection to Mitzrayim, all the yetzer’s plans will fall away!

Bechol Dor Vador (2)

This pasuk tells us that “**בכל דור ודור חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא ממצרים**”—In every generation, a person must see himself as if he himself left Mitzrayim.”

Yetzias Mitzrayim isn’t something that happened to our grandfathers and grandmothers tens of generations ago. Every one of us—fathers, mothers, children and grandchildren—were in Mitzrayim, and we were all redeemed by Hashem Himself.

In fact, we say this clearly in the Haggadah.

“Hashem didn’t only redeem our fathers from Mitzrayim,” we read in the Haggadah. “He redeemed us, too, together with them. As the pasuk says, **ואותנו הוציא ממצרים**—and He took us out of there.”

We read a similar concept in Avadim Hayinu: “If Hashem hadn’t taken our fathers out of Mitzrayim, then us, our children, and our children’s children would still be enslaved to Paraoh in Mitzrayim.”

Later on, at the end of the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim, we make a brachah thanking Hashem “**אשר גאלנו ונאל**”—Who redeemed us, and redeemed our fathers.” We first mention that Hashem redeemed “*us*,” and only then do we mention that He redeemed “our fathers.”

Yetzias Mitzrayim isn’t something that happened to our grandfathers and grandmothers tens of generations ago

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This is also a lesson for every Jew at all times.

A Jew might wonder: “What strength do we have that will allow us to overcome galus and prepare for ‘Moshiach now?’”

The Torah answers: just as Hashem, the “King of all kings” Himself, personally took the Jews out of Mitzrayim, He will certainly do the same now! Hashem, the “Commander in Chief” of Tzivos Hashem, will take each and every one of us, along with the entire Jewish nation, and redeem us from galus!

————— SUMMARY —————

The pasuk of Bechol Dor Vador reminds us that Yetzias Mitzrayim affects us personally—if our ancestors hadn’t been redeemed from Mitzrayim, we would still be slaves ourselves! If we live with this thought, it will become much easier for us to yearn and prepare for Moshiach. Hashem Himself took us out of Mitzrayim back then, and He will surely take us out of this galus right away!

Bechol Dor Vador (3)

This pasuk tells us that “**בכל דור ודור (ובכל יום ויום) –חייב אדם לראות את עצמו כאילו הוא יצא (היום) ממצרים**”—
In every generation, and every day, a person must see himself as if today he himself left Mitzrayim.”

From this it's understood that we need to think about how Yetzias Mitzrayim happened, and what the Jewish people did at that time to earn and prepare themselves for their redemption from Mitzrayim.

This will teach us what we need to do to earn and prepare for our redemption from the current galus, which will happen very soon with Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

Every Jew took part in the preparations for Yetzias Mitzrayim. The children, however, were especially prepared. Our chachamim tell us that at Krias Yam Suf the children “recognized Him first.” The children born in Mitzrayim recognized Hashem even earlier, and in an even greater way, than the adults.

If they recognized Hashem first at Krias Yam Suf, it's obvious that even while Bnei Yisroel were still in Mitzrayim, the children took upon themselves Hashem's mitzvos in a way that was somehow greater than the adults. (These are the mitzvos that were the preparation for leaving Mitzrayim.) That's why at Krias Yam Suf—

We need to constantly think about how Yetzias Mitzrayim happened, and what the Jewish people did at that time to prepare themselves for their redemption from Mitzrayim

which happened on the seventh (and final) day of the very first Pesach in history—“they recognized Him first.”

The fact that “they recognized Him first” shows that even though they were born and raised in Mitzrayim, they still decided to behave the way Hashem wanted them to, by learning Torah and doing mitzvos, especially the mitzvos that Hashem told them to fulfill right away, even before they left Mitzrayim: the mitzvos of Pesach.

In fact, we actually do find a special command from Hashem regarding the korban Pesach, which needed to be “*שה לבית*”—one sheep per house.”

When the father of the family set up the korban Pesach, he had to include every one of his children—even the very young ones—both his sons and his daughters

When the father of the family set up the korban Pesach, he had to include every one of his children—even the very young ones—both his sons and his daughters.

Later, when the entire household, including the children, ate the korban Pesach, they fulfilled the mitzvah properly.

This korban Pesach brought about “*ופסחתי*,” the “jumping.” Hashem overlooked and “jumped over” any calculations that could have been made and brought the geulah immediately.

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Since the Jewish children took part in the preparations for leaving Mitzrayim—to the point that “they recognized Him first”—it’s understood that the

same is true now, as we prepare to leave our current galus.

Now, too, the Jewish children have an important role. By behaving the way Jewish children should behave, they can bring about the geulah.

Because of this, every Jewish child needs to think about the events that led up to the geulah from mitzrayim and how Yetzias Mitzrayim took place. What did the Jews do to earn their redemption and prepare themselves for it?

Even though adults should be thinking about this, too, the children—both boys and girls, even if they’re very young—should focus on it with even more warmth and excitement. Because just as the children “recognized Hashem first” during Yetzias Mitzrayim—even before their parents did—they will also be the first to recognize Hashem at *this* geulah.

Since the children will play this special role in the geulah, they need to focus their minds on understanding and knowing how we should be behaving *today*—how we can prepare ourselves for leaving our current galus, and how we can earn the complete geulah with Moshiach Tzidkeinu very soon.

Now, by Yetzias Mitzrayim, the main preparation Bnei Yisroel made for the geulah was bringing the

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korban Pesach. The same is also true in our times: We prepare ourselves for Moshiach by bringing a “korban” from the things that Hashem wants us to dedicate to holiness. After we do this, we will also have the “eating of the korban”—meaning that Hashem will provide us with everything we need.

And since Torah tells us to “love our fellow as we love ourselves,” it isn’t enough for Jewish children to prepare for the geulah *themselves*—they also need to influence *others*, such as their friends and neighbors, to do the same.

All of this will bring and speed up the coming of the true and complete geulah with Moshiach Tzidkeinu. Moshiach will take each and every Jew out of galus—not a single person will remain, and he will bring us to our holy land of Eretz Yisroel, speedily in our days.

SUMMARY

The pasuk of Bechol Dor Vador teaches us that Yetzias Mitzrayim isn’t just something that took place thousands of years ago—it’s directly relevant to us now, in our daily lives.

In this generation specifically—the generation of Moshiach’s coming—this lesson is even more important.

Chazal tell us that the coming geulah will be similar to the geulah of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

When the Jews left Mitzrayim, the first to recognize Hashem by Krias Yam Suf weren’t the adults—it was Jewish children like you!

As we approach the final geulah, think about how you can be like the children back then. What can you do to bring Moshiach closer, and to make sure everyone around you does the same? One important thing you can do is to bring a "korban," just like the Jews did then. Of course, nowadays we can't bring actual korbanos, but you can still "offer up" things to Hashem. You can dedicate your time, your energy, and your possessions to doing what Hashem wants, and encourage others to do the same.

Ki Karov

■ n the title page of Tanya, the Alter Rebbe says that the sefer is based on the pasuk “**כִּי קָרוֹב אֲלֵיכָם הַדָּבָר מִאֵת בְּפִיךְ**”—This thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to do it.”

The Tanya teaches us how to serve Hashem properly. As the Alter Rebbe explains later on in the sefer, “Hashem is standing over him...examining his mind and heart, to see whether he is serving Him properly.” Hashem, Who fills the entire world—the heavens and the earth—sets it all aside to focus on each and every Jew, even very young children, and see how they are serving Him.

When a Jew starts to think about serving Hashem properly, the yetzer hara can come and try to confuse

Hashem, Who fills the entire world—the heavens and the earth—sets it all aside to focus on each and every Jew, even very young children, and see how they are serving Him

him. “How and where are you going to get strength to serve Hashem properly?” the yetzer hara asks. This question is especially strong in regards to young children. Then the yetzer hara comes and says that “serving Hashem properly is very hard! Wait until you grow up first and learn a lot of Torah and do a lot of mitzvos. Then, once you’ve had some experience, you can think about serving Hashem ‘properly!’”

Where does a young child get the strength to overcome the yetzer hara, who tries to confuse him?

The Alter Rebbe answers this question right in the beginning of Tanya, which is based on the pasuk of “Ki Karov.” Meaning that in His Torah, Hashem tells every Jew that not only will they succeed if they “work hard” (as we see in the pasuk of “Yogati”)—even more than that, “it’s *close* to you.” Serving Hashem properly is something they don’t need to work too much for, because it’s “close” to them.

As the pasuk continues, it’s close to us “in your mouth, and in your heart, to do it.” It isn’t only “close” to us to serve Hashem with our mouths and our hearts—meaning, to speak and think the way we’re supposed to. Even “to do it,” to follow all of Hashem’s mitzvos in actuality, is “close” to us. As the pasuk specifically says, all this isn’t just doable, it’s “very close to us” (“**תְּאַמֵּן**”).

Hashem tells every Jew that serving Him properly is something they don't need to work too much for

SUMMARY

One of the main ways the yetzer hara will try to get you not to do the right thing is by convincing you that “it’s hard.” If something is hard, and you don’t have the strength to do it, it’s much more likely that you’ll just give up!

But this is nothing more than another one of the yetzer’s tricks; in truth, the Torah tells us, keeping Torah and mitzvos is very close to us! All you have to do is try, and Hashem will help you—even if you’re still a young child.

Vehinei Hashem (1)

Asoldier sets themselves apart through kabbolas ol—simple obedience to the commander. As members of Hashem's army, we need to accept upon ourselves to follow all the commands that are given by Hashem, the “Commander” of Tzivos Hashem, and serve Him properly.

Now, there's a big difference between the army of Hashem and all other armies of the world.

In a typical army, the generals and commander stay in one place and the soldiers are somewhere else. In Hashem's army, on the other hand, the “Commander” is with every soldier, “standing over him and...examining his mind and his heart, to see whether he is serving Him properly.”

Hashem stands near every single soldier and looks at them with complete attention. He examines their thoughts, words, and actions to see whether they are serving Him the way they should be and following all the orders He wrote in His Torah—until every thought, word, and action is appropriate for someone who is so close to Hashem Himself!

Unlike the commander of a typical army, Hashem is with every one of His soldiers

When a child in Tzivos Hashem finds out about this, they will certainly start behaving the way Hashem wants every day.

Then, when the yetzer hara comes and asks why they are unwilling to take something that belongs to one of their friends, even though no one is watching, there are no "policemen" in the area

Or why they are afraid to speak lashon hara about someone else, even though the person can't hear, and their father and principal aren't around either

Or why they refuse to listen when a non-Jewish child tries to convince them to eat something that a Jew is not allowed to eat, or to do something on Shabbos which is not appropriate for such a holy day (because Shabbos has to be *completely* different from a regular weekday)

The child will be completely unaffected by all this. In fact, it will be very *easy* for them to do what Hashem wants, and behave the way a Jewish child should.

True, there's no "policeman" forcing him to do the right thing... but there is "an eye that sees and an ear that hears" everything! Hashem is "standing over him," and He sees he steals, or speaks lashon hara!

**True, there's no
"policeman" forcing
a Jewish child to
do the right thing...
but there is "an
eye that sees and
an ear that hears"
everything!**

• •

Since Hashem is always with every Jewish child, it's understood even logically (and certainly with simple emunah) that Hashem must also be giving the strength needed to "serve Him properly," and continue rising and growing in Torah and mitzvos.

Furthermore, this gives him strength to do it all with joy. When a child knows that Hashem stands with him at all times, even though Hashem is so great, it brings him the greatest happiness.

When a child does their Avodah this way, growing in Torah and mitzvos with joy, they will be even *more* successful than before. We see this clearly in human nature: On a happy day, a person does a lot more, and with much more success, than they would on an ordinary day. "Simchah breaks all boundaries", and gives us the ability to constantly improve our Avodah and serve Hashem in a better and greater way each day.

————— SUMMARY —————

The pasuk of Vehinei teaches us that Hashem is always standing over us, watching to see what we do throughout our day, and which choices we make. If you keep this thought in mind, the yetzer hara will never be able to trick you! Even if he comes to you and tries convincing you to do something not-right—and he assures you that nobody's watching, and that you won't get in trouble—you have a ready response:

"I don't need any person to be watching!" you answer him. "Even if there's no policeman looking at me, and my parents aren't around—Hashem is still watching. He created the heavens and the earth, and yet He's focusing specifically on me—how could I possibly go against His will!?"

Vehinei Hashem (2)

The pasuk of “Vehinei Hashem” shows us the tremendous importance of every single Jew. Not only as Chazal say, that each Jew is “a whole world,” but even more than that: Hashem, Who “fills the entire world”—the heavens, the earth, and everything in them—sets it all aside and “stands over” every Jew, “examining his mind and his heart, to see whether he is serving Him properly.”

Because to Hashem, every action a Jew does, every word they say, and every thought they think is more important than everything else that happens in the heavens and the earth. (And to Hashem, there's no difference between a word spoken out loud and a thought in the mind.) That's why Hashem pays so much attention to what we do. And at each moment He evaluates whether we're serving Him the way we should be, no matter what we were doing the second before.

This applies to every Jew without exception, because every single Jewish person is a descendant of the Avos, who were called “the chariot” because they were dedicated to Hashem so deeply like a chariot that listens to the rider. And more specifically a descendant of Yaakov Avinu, who the pasuk of “וְהִנֵּה הוּא נִצְבֵּן עַל־יְדֵי” was said about - therefore “Hashem stands over” every single Jew. **עד סוף כל הדורות**.

To Hashem, every action a Jew does, every word he says, and every thought he has is more important than everything else that happens in the heavens and the earth!

In addition to this, Hashem—who created every Jew, gave him life, and “stands over him” always—certainly gives each of us all the brachos we need.

From all this it is understood how extraordinarily special every single Jew is and how respectfully we need to treat our fellow Jews.

————— SUMMARY ————

Sometimes it can seem as if the things you do don't matter to Hashem. After all, He's such a great Creator...how could He possibly care about what you're doing?! The pasuk of Vehinei, however, tells us that Hashem does care—in fact, He is standing over you, at this very moment, waiting to see if you will do the right thing! If you go against His will, chas veshalom, Hashem sees it and becomes disappointed; if you keep His mitzvos, on the other hand—especially if it's hard—know that you're bringing Him tremendous nachas and joy!

Bereishis Bara (1)

The very first lesson of the entire Torah—the “rule book” for every Jew, especially the children of Tzivos Hashem—is ברא אלקים את השמים “In the beginning, Hashem created the heavens and the earth.”

The Torah teaches us that Hashem is the creator of everything—from the highest heavens (“שמים”) to the furthest corner of the earth (“ארץ”). Additionally, as Chazal explain, the extra word “את” in the pasuk (“את השמים ואות הארץ”) includes all of the creatures that fill the sky (“את השמים”) and that occupy the land (“אות הארץ”). Everything was created by Hashem.

This is the reason why the Torah begins with the pasuk of Bereishis. The lesson it teaches us is the foundation of every Jew’s life and the foundation of the Jewish people. When a Jew clearly understands that everything was created by Hashem, they will make sure to act the way Hashem wants them to and follow Torah’s guidance in everything that they do.

When a Jew clearly understands that everything was created by Hashem, they will make sure to do only what Hashem wants

This is also the reason why a Jew, before even taking a simple drink of water, will make a brachah: “שהכל נהי”—*everything* was created through Hashem’s words.” The Jew is thanking Hashem, not just for the small drink of water right then, but for *all* of creation—the skies, the earth, and everything that lives in them. *Everything* was

created through Hashem's speech, as Chazal tell us, "the world was made with [Hashem's] ten utterances."

• •

When a Jewish child reminds themselves that Hashem is the One Who created the entire world and renews it constantly, it becomes easier for them to do what they need to do as a member of Tzivos Hashem. This, in turn, gives them the strength needed to overcome the difficulties caused by the yetzer hara.

For instance, let's say a Jewish child sees something delicious. The yetzer hara comes and tries to convince the child to grab it quickly and eat it without saying a brachah. So the child answers: "Listen up! You're 'old and foolish!' Don't you know that Hashem created everything that exists, including this tasty treat? Before I eat it, I need to make a brachah and thank Hashem for giving me such delicious food."

Aside from giving thanks to Hashem, there's another side to this. If we need to eat, strengthen our bodies, and give them pleasure, we certainly need to strengthen our neshamos and do things that bring them pleasure. We do this by making brachos, learning Torah, and doing mitzvos.

This also applies to any other area where the yetzer hara—or a non-Jewish child—tries to convince a Jewish child to disobey Hashem, chas veshalom. The Jewish child immediately answers back: "Hashem created the heavens and the earth! From the 'beginning,' the very

first day, and the very first *moment*, Hashem has been constantly renewing the entire world and everything in it.”

As a soldier of Tzivos Hashem, he goes out to war with the yetzer hara, who tries to cover up and hide the fact that Hashem is the only One who controls the world and everything in it, but the Jewish child defeats him.

The mission of a Jew is to *reveal* this truth—that Hashem is the Creator—to the entire world. This is one of the reasons why Hashem’s first utterance was “let there be light.” When an area is well lit, everything within it can be clearly seen. This is what Hashem wants from a Jew: to make the world bright, so that everyone can see that Hashem is the Creator. When this is revealed, all the people will conduct themselves in the way that Hashem wants them to. Then the world will truly be bright, both physically and spiritually.

If we need to eat, strengthen our bodies, and give them pleasure, we certainly need to strengthen our neshamos and do things that bring them pleasure

————— SUMMARY —————

As Jews, our mission is to let the world know that Hashem created everything that exists—the heavens, the earth, and everything in them.

Before you drink water, you make a brachah to thank Hashem for the fact that “everything was created through His words.” Although you’re only drinking a small cup of water, you use it as an opportunity to remind yourself—and others

SPECIAL MISSIONS

around you—that this world has a Creator, and
that He gave us His Torah and mitzvos!

This also provides a simple response to the yetzer
hara, whenever he tries to distract you from
serving Hashem—for example, by convincing
you that you're in too much of a rush to make
a brachah. If you think for one moment about
how the world is being constantly created by
Hashem, the yetzer hara's arguments will be
revealed as foolish—how could you not thank
Hashem for all the good that He's done for you?!

Bereishis Bara (2)

On the pasuk “ברא אלקים את השמים ואת הארץ—in the beginning, Hashem created the heavens and the earth,” Chazal explain that the world was created “for the sake of the Jewish people and for the Torah.” This means that the entire world—the sky, the land, and everything in them—was created so that the Jewish people could learn Torah, connect with it, and live their lives according to its instructions.

When a child thinks about this, it will become much easier for them to behave the way a Jewish child should.

Imagine if the President of the United States would summon you, and personally ask you to act according to his instructions. As a reward, the President will invite you to a celebration at his private mansion, seat you at the head table, and rearrange everything in the mansion the way *you* want, to make *you* feel more comfortable.

Of course, you know what you would do!

Imagine if the President of the United States would summon you, and personally ask you to act according to his instructions

You would make sure to follow the instructions exactly and not do anything to disobey them. Even if something feels good, you would hold yourself back because it would go against the request of the President, who invited you to his mansion, and it wouldn't be hard to control yourself and behave the way the President has asked you.

How much more so when we're talking about Hashem!

When one thinks about what the Torah tells us—that Hashem created the entire world “for the Yidden and for the Torah”—it will be easy to fulfill what Hashem is asking and act the way a Jewish child should.

This is especially true when a child realizes that their actions matter not only to them, their parents, and their teachers, but to the entire world. Not only that, but Hashem Himself *personally* asked a Jewish child to behave this way!

SUMMARY

The fact that Hashem created the world should make us understand how wonderful it is to be Jewish, and what a privilege it is to have Hashem's Torah and mitzvos.

After all, if a human king or leader would show you personal attention, you'd be blown away—and of course, you'd make sure to do what that person asks of you, and not go against him.

How much more so does this apply to Hashem, the Creator of the entire world! He chose us to be His people, and gave us His mitzvos ... how could we not keep them?!

Bereishis Bara (3)

Hashem is the Creator of “the heavens and the earth” (*את השמים ואות הארץ*), along with everything in them. As Chazal tell us, the pasuk adds the extra word “*את*” twice, to include all of the creatures that fill the sky (“*את השמים*”) and that occupy the land (“*ואת הארץ*”).

On a deeper level, though, a person’s life can also be divided between “heaven” and “earth.”

“Heaven” means the spiritual things a person does—learning Torah, fulfilling mitzvos, and all other aspects of Yiddishkeit. “Earth” refers to all the physical parts of daily life—eating, drinking, and sleeping.

When a Jew, living in this physical world, involves himself in holy things, he brings the “heavens” down to the “earth.” But this doesn’t just apply to Torah and mitzvos. A Jew also needs to brighten up his physical activities with “heavenly” light. When eating and drinking, for instance, it should be a “bright” eating and drinking.

A Jew needs to brighten up physical activities with “heavenly” light

How? By making a brachah before eating or drinking, which reminds a person about Hashem and thanks Him for creating the food or drink.

The same also applies when going to sleep. Before lying down, a Jew says Krias Shema, a reminder that “Hashem is One” and that He alone is King of the entire world.

This unifying of the “heaven” and the “earth” needs to take place in every aspect of a Jew’s life (just as the pasuk “את השמים ואת הארץ” includes everything on the earth and in the heavens). Every detail of the Torah a Jew learns, and every part of the mitzvos he does, needs to serve as a way to “light up” the physical parts of life.

————— SUMMARY —————

The pasuk of Bereishis tells us how Hashem created the heavens and the earth. On a deeper level, it’s telling us a very important mission we have as Jews:

We need to take our earthly things—like eating, drinking, sleeping, and so on—and make them “heavenly” and holy.

When you make a brachah, the food you eat or the water you drink becomes holy! It isn’t just a physical, “earthly” object—it’s now something that reminded you of Hashem, and which gives you energy to do the things Hashem wants of you!

Veshinantam Levanecha (1)

Jewish people act very differently than people from all other nations. When a Jewish child needs to do something, they don't look to see what their non-Jewish friends are doing—they find out what Torah and Shulchan Aruch have to say about it!

The same thing applies to how a Jewish child uses their time. They don't look to see what non-Jewish children are filling their time with—instead they follow Torah's guidance and fill their time with Torah learning. As this pasuk instructs us, a Jewish child “teaches the Torah to his children,” and learns it “when he sits in his house, when he travels, when he goes to sleep, and when he wakes up.”

When a Jew walks or travels somewhere, he takes a sefer or Torah booklet with him, so he can learn Torah on the way

When he walks or travels somewhere, he takes a sefer or Torah booklet with him, so he can learn Torah on the way. And when he's at home, he learns Torah too—even though he's no longer in his school, Cheder, Talmud Torah, or Yeshiva—because he knows that Torah learning needs to be done *always*, even when he's “sitting in his house.”

SUMMARY

Torah isn't only meant to be learned when you're in school or Cheder—as the pasuk of Veshinantam tells us, it's meant to be learned everywhere!

SPECIAL MISSIONS

Wherever you go, whenever it may be,
look for opportunities to study Torah, and
to teach it to those around you.

Veshinantam Levanecha (2)

The mitzvah of “וְשִׁנָּתֶם לְבָנֶיךָ”—teaching Torah to children—comes before the command of “וְדִבָּרָתֶךָ בְּם”—you shall speak of it.” That means that even before the Jewish people were commanded to learn Torah *themselves*, Hashem already told them to teach their children.

As Rashi explains, the word “your children” (“לְבָנֶיךָ”) is referring to “your students.” This refers to anyone that a Jew is able to teach Torah to, not just a person’s own children.

Even though this pasuk simply seems to be speaking to adults, it can also be done by children—every child can teach another child something new.

And this should be in a way of “וְשִׁנָּתֶם,” which means to give their friend an especially clear and strong understanding of what is being taught and that it should be expressed in their thoughts, speech and actions. (As the Gemara explains, the word “וְשִׁנָּתֶם” implies sharpness—“the words of Torah should be ‘sharp’ in your mouth.”)

Even though this pasuk simply seems to be speaking to adults, it can also be done by children: every child can teach another child something new

SUMMARY

In the pasuk of Veshinantam, Hashem commands the Jewish people to learn Torah, and to teach it to their children.

SPECIAL MISSIONS

Interestingly, the command to learn Torah yourself comes after the command to teach your children (which includes teaching anyone who knows less than you do)!

The lesson from this is clear: You don't have to wait until you're a big scholar to share what you know with others! Take whatever you've already learned and teach it to those who don't know—brighten their lives with the light of Torah!

Yogati Umotzosi Taamin (1)

A Jew should always try to “go upward in holiness,” and look for new ways to grow. “Maybe there’s another mitzvah that I can add to the mitzvos I already do,” a Jew thinks to themselves, “maybe I can improve my behavior somehow or spend more time doing things that are connected with Hashem’s mitzvos.”

When we try, we are promised, “if you work hard, you will succeed.” When someone really puts effort into looking for opportunities to increase the amount of mitzvos they do, and to do them in a better way than the day before, they will certainly find them.

For example: No matter how much Torah a child learns during school hours, they are always able to take some of their own free time—the time that’s free to use however they want—and use it to learn another pasuk of Torah, another mishnah, or another subject.

The same is true with mitzvos. No matter how many brachos a child normally makes or how many mitzvos a child usually does, another tzedakah coin or another good deed with Ahavas Yisroel can always be added, and so on.

When a Jewish child sees that they were successful, and that they were able to obey Hashem’s will by

**No matter how
much Torah a child
learns during
school hours, he
is always able to
take some of his
own free time and
use it to learn a
little bit more**

learning more Torah and doing more mitzvos, it will be much easier to overcome their yetzer hara the next day.

When the yetzer hara comes and tries to convince them that they've learned enough Torah or that they've spent enough time doing mitzvos, they ignore the yetzer hara completely. And instead of listening to the yetzer hara, the child increases even *more* in Torah and mitzvos, and is successful once again.

SUMMARY

The pasuk of Yogati contains a simple but powerful message: If you really put your mind to something, you will succeed! If you find that you're not successful, ask yourself whether you're really giving it your all. Is there more that you could be doing to serve Hashem properly, and to grow from the way you were yesterday?

If the answer is yes—do it! And you will certainly see Hashem's brachos helping you, leading you on the path to success

Yogati Umotzosi Taamin (2)

Chazal here use the word/expression "believe" ("תאמין") - you should believe that if you work hard you will succeed.

On a deeper level, this pasuk tells us that Torah "believes" that every Jew—even a small child—will "work hard" and succeed.

After all, every Jew has the strength to know what they need to do and how to do it. And they have the ability to use this strength out in actuality, which is the main thing.

—**מאמינים בני מאמינים** “believers, the sons of believers,” no matter how young they are in age.

When a little girl gets up in the morning, she begins her day by saying Modeh Ani. She thanks Hashem and expresses her belief in Him, and she goes through her entire day with this emunah.

Everything she does, every word she says, and every thought she thinks is filled with her belief in Hashem.

Every Jewish child has this belief. The Torah—which is the “Torah of life” that guides us through our daily lives—teaches them how to bring it into action and how to live with it every day of the year, for their whole life.

**The Torah believes
that every Jew—
even a small
child—will work
hard and succeed**

So when a Jewish child decides that they're going to behave in this way, "believe them." We believe them that they will certainly work hard and succeed.

———— SUMMARY ————

Sometimes it can seem hard to serve Hashem the way we're supposed to. It can seem as if the yetzer hara's too strong, and there's not way we can possibly overcome him. The pasuk of Yogati, however, tells us that this isn't true: We can do the right thing, no matter how hard it is!

Hashem gives us all the strength we need, and He "believes" ("תאמין") that we can do it. All we need to do is try our best, and we will surely succeed!

Ve'ahavta Lerei'acha Kamocha

On the pasuk of “ואהבת לרעך כמוך”—love your friend as you love yourself,” Rabbi Akivah explains that “זה כלל גדול בתורה”—this is a basic rule of the Torah.” This underlines how great and important this mitzvah is—it contains the *entire* Torah. As Hillel explained, this mitzvah means simply “not do to someone else what you wouldn't want done to you. This is the entire Torah—everything else is commentary.” In other words, the whole Torah is an explanation on how to fulfill the general mitzvah of Ahavas Yisroel.

All the mitzvos of the Torah are split into two types: the mitzvos asei—the things that we should do; and the mitzvos lo saasei—the things that Hashem tells us not to do. This is the basis for a Torah-life. We stay away from the mitzvos lo saasei (what the pasuk refers to as “סור מרע”—avoiding bad”) and do all the mitzvos asei (called “עשה טוב—doing good”). In other words, Torah tells us what we should love to do and what we shouldn't do. The same thing applies when it comes to loving our friends.

In order to fully fulfill the mitzvah of Ahavas Yisroel, we need to love our friends as we love ourselves (“כמוך”). As the Rambam says, “it is a mitzvah for every person to love each and every Jew *like they love their own selves*, as the pasuk says, 'love your friend as you love yourself.'”

**The true reason
for Ahavas Yisroel
is Achdus Yisroel—
the fact that all
Jews are really one**

This is because the true reason for Ahavas Yisroel is *Achdus Yisroel*—the fact that all Jews are really one. That's why the mitzvah applies to every Jew, even someone who lives very far away across the sea. Even if the bodies of the Jewish people are far away, their neshamos—which aren't limited by space—are always one.

All this is especially true when Jews come together through Torah, through this, they show that their neshamos are the main thing and that their bodies (which are the only thing that's really far away, as we said) are secondary. This brings out that they are united together even when they are physically very distant from each other.

A Jew can only have true Ahavas Yisroel once he realizes that his neshamah is more important than his body

As the Alter Rebbe explains, the only way for a Jew to have true Ahavas Yisroel is to realize that the neshamah is the main thing and the body is secondary. Since the neshamos of every single Jew come from the same "Father"—Hashem—they are all "brothers" to one another.

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At the same time, we need to remember that having a feeling of Ahavas Yisroel in our hearts—or even speaking nicely to our fellow Jews and thinking about them—isn't enough. (Even though it's also very important.) We fully express our Ahavas Yisroel with actual action.

We need to put physical effort—with our own strength, money, and so on—into helping every Jew that we can with whatever they need, and do it with joy.

This is also one of the most important mitzvos that bring Hashem tremendous nachas and pleasure. As the Alter Rebbe explains in Tanya, tzedakah is equal to “all the other mitzvos put together.”

When we realize how much nachas Hashem gets from this, we will enjoy it much more, and make sure to do it with quickly, happily and in the best possible way.

We need to put physical effort—with our own strength, money, and so on—into helping every Jew that we can with whatever they need, and do it with joy

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As we said before, the mitzvos in the Torah—and, by the same token, a person’s behavior—are divided into two categories. There’s mitzvos asei and mitzvos lo saasei, doing good and avoiding bad.

These two aspects are also true when it comes to the mitzvah of Ahavas Yisroel. We “do good” by loving our fellow Jew as we love ourselves, and we “avoid bad” by making absolutely sure to never disrespect another person. As Hillel said, “don’t do to someone else what you wouldn’t want done to you.”

In other words, it isn’t enough for Hashem to instruct us to “do good” for our friends, and love them as we love ourselves. We also need to have a specific command *not* to do to others what we wouldn’t want done to ourselves.

By nature, people think that if they did someone else a favor—gave them tzedakah, for example, or they helped out with something else—they now have the right to take that person less seriously and not give them that much respect. And if they've done favors for this person many times, they feel this way even more.

We need to know, however, that this isn't true. Even if Hashem gave a Jewish boy or girl the merit and opportunity to help out their friend, and to do it happily, they still need to be extremely careful not to feel or act superior to that person (or any other people, for that matter).

Every Jewish child (and every Jew, in general) needs to know that they can't take something from a friend, no matter how good it looks or how much they want it

Another example of "avoiding bad" when it comes to Ahavas Yisroel: Every Jewish child (and every Jew, in general) needs to know that they can't take something from a friend, no matter how good it looks or how much they want it, and also can't "pass someone else's borders." What does that mean?

Let's say, for example, that a child wants to buy a toy or a candy, but someone else got there first and was about to buy the last one. The child needs to be careful not to "pass" the other person's "borders" by offering the shopkeeper more money—say, a few cents extra—for the toy or candy. Since the other person got there first, doing something like that would be like "crossing borders," and taking their place. We aren't allowed to do that.

After all, if someone did that to us, we wouldn't like it at all! And something that we don't like, as Hillel said, we shouldn't do to others either.

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It's easier to understand how important respecting other people is—and it becomes easier to do, too—when we think about the fact that our fellow Jews are also students of Rabbi Akivah.

The Gemara tells us that the entire Torah Shebaal Peh—along with all the explanations of Torah Shebichsav—are based on the teachings that Rabbi Akivah gave over to his students. Those students taught it to *their* students, who taught it to theirs, and so on until, eventually, it reached us today.

**Every Jew who
learns Torah
is a student of
Rabbi Akivah**

That means that every Jew who learns Torah is a student of Rabbi Akivah!

So whenever we meet with another Jew—child or adult—we need to keep in mind that we're speaking to a student of Rabbi Akivah himself. In fact, it's possible that this person is an even greater student than we are!

Furthermore, as students of Rabbi Akivah, every Jew is also a colleague of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai (since Rabbi Shimon was a student of Rabbi Akivah.)

So when we have the merit to do a favor for another Jew, either by speaking nicely to them or doing something good for them, not only does this not give us the right to treat them disrespectfully (chas veshalom), but, on the

contrary, we now have the opportunity to be even more respectful, and to do it with joy and happiness.

— SUMMARY —

The pasuk of Ve'ahavta brings out one of the most important points in the Torah; The mitzvah of Ahavas Yisroel, to love your fellow Jew as you love yourself.

Often, it's hard to love your fellow Jew, especially when he's different than you. But you need to remember that those differences are only as far as his body is concerned; his neshamah—which is really the main part of a Jew—is very much the same as yours! And since you both come from the same Hashem, you share a spiritual “Father,” which makes you actual brothers!

At the same time, even while having Ahavas Yisroel and being kind to your fellow, it's important to make sure to respect him—even though you did him a favor, it certainly doesn't give you the right to chas veshalom embarrass him, or to treat him lightly! When you do all you can to be kind and generous to every Jew—and guard yourself against doing anything that may chas veshalom harm or disrespect him—you make Hashem very proud of you, and bring down His brachos for yourself and your family!

Yismach Yisroel

“**ישמח ישראל בעושיו**—‘Rejoice, Yisroel, in your Maker’”
 פירושSCP מילוי שhort מזרע שshort יש The Torah tells us that “**ישמח בשמחה**—‘**אשר ש שמח בדירתו בתהтонים**—this means that everyone who belongs to the Jewish people should rejoice in Hashem’s happiness, who rejoices and is happy in His dwelling place in the lowest worlds.”

When a Jew remembers their “Maker”—that Hashem created him—that very thought itself should bring a tremendous feeling of joy.

This joy will become even greater when they think about how great of a merit it is that Hashem chose them to be part of His “army” and gave them the holy mission of carrying out the purpose of the whole creation—to make this world a dwelling place for Hashem by learning Torah and doing mitzvos, making it clear wherever he goes that Hashem is there and in control.

A Jew’s greatest joy is rejoicing in Hashem’s happiness

A Jew’s greatest joy is rejoicing in Hashem’s happiness, because of a Jew’s deep bond with Hashem, when he knows that Hashem is rejoicing with His “home” in this world, Hashem’s joy becomes their joy, too.

This brings together the two simchos—the joy of the Jew, and the joy of his Creator—and makes them one.

————— SUMMARY —————

The pasuk of Yismach touches upon two different thoughts that will cause you to rejoice in being a Jew: One is the thought that Hashem chose you to create a dwelling place for Him in this world. Imagine—the Creator of all that exists personally picked you to be in His army, and transform the world for the good!

Then there's an even greater joy: you rejoice because Hashem is happy. Just like you'd feel happy if something good happened to someone you're very close to—your sibling, parent, or best friend—the same is true here: You love Hashem so much, that the joy He gets from your Torah and mitzvos makes you happy, too!

SPECIAL MISSIONS: MISCELLANEOUS

Printing Twelve Pesukim Booklets

One of the purposes of a Tzivos Hashem gathering is to give out prizes to the children who did especially well, and especially those who convinced other children to enlist in Tzivos Hashem.

The Twelve Pesukim booklets will have a few blank sheets at the end, where you can write down the names of the children you convinced to volunteer in Hashem's army.

Therefore we will be making an exclusive reprint of the Twelve Pesukim booklets—on special paper—with a few blank sheets at the end of the booklets, where you can write down the names of the children you convinced to volunteer in Hashem's army.

At the next gathering, everyone will show their booklets with the names of all the children they “mobilized” to sign up for Tzvos Hashem and those who did especially well will get special prizes.

SUMMARY

As a soldier in Tzivos Hashem, it's not enough for you to learn the Twelve Pesukim yourself—you also have to enlist other children, and show them how wonderful it is to serve in Hashem's army!

Next time you come to a rally, show how many children you've recruited!

Learning the Twelve Pesukim

Chazal tell us that when two people depart from one another, they should share a “**דבר הלכה**”—a teaching of Halachah.”

The explanation for this is as follows: By learning a Halachah together before we go our separate ways, this makes sure that our departure from each other isn’t a real *separation*. Because even when we each go our separate ways, we need to stay connected as one..

They are able to create this oneness by learning a “teaching of Halachah” because Torah is eternal and isn’t affected by the limitations of time and space. On the contrary, learning Halachah removes the limits since it’s a teaching of Hashem, Who is “all-powerful” and can do whatever He wants. Therefore when two Jews learn a Halachah together before going away from each other, they remain connected even once they’ve arrived at their separate destinations.

As the Baal Shem Tov teaches, wherever a person’s thoughts are, that’s where they are. So when both Jews think about the same Halachah, they are together in the same place.

That’s why we say the Twelve Pesukim together at every Tzivos Hashem gathering, and we resolve to review them on our own from time to time. The pesukim serve

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SPECIAL MISSIONS: MISCELLANEOUS

as the “Halachah” that keeps us united forever, even when we go back to our own houses.

————— SUMMARY —————

Saying the Twelve Pesukim at a Tzivos Hashem rally has another very important effect: It takes the Ahavas Yisroel and unity that we experience here and brings it into the rest of our lives. When you review the Twelve Pesukim at home, think about the thousands of other children who are all learning these same pesukim!