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Parsha

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Shabbos Ends

Behar

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Reflective
Question:Where are you holding so tightly...
that trusting for today might let the light in?Gematria on the Parshah:
Emunah the Secret to Brachah

By: Reb Moshe Herskovits

In Parshat Behar, Hashem commands the mitzvah of Shemitah. For six years, Bnei Yisrael work the land, and in the seventh year, it is forbidden to plant. What is the message behind Shemitah, and what lesson does it teach us in our own lives?

Shemitah Trains Emunah

Rav Zusha teaches that Shemitah is the ultimate training in emunah. By refraining from working the land for an entire year, we declare that Hashem is the true Provider, not our own efforts. The Torah promises that through keeping Shemitah, Hashem will provide enough food for up to three years.

Rav Zusha explains that this lesson applies to every Jew in every time and place. The level of blessing a person receives is directly connected to their emunah.

He teaches that when a person places conditions on Hashem, saying that salvation can only come if I do X, Hashem responds within that framework. However, when a person truly believes that Hashem can provide under any circumstance, even without natural effort, Hashem brings blessing in ways beyond nature.

The word פרנסה (livelihood) is the gematria of 395, the same as השמים (the heavens). This teaches that when a person recognizes that sustenance comes from the heavens, Hashem sends blessing in its proper time.

Rashbi and the Power of Emunah

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and his son Rabbi Elazar sustained themselves for 13 years in a cave through Torah learning. Hashem provided them with a carob tree and a spring of water.

The word חרוב (carob) is the gematria of 216, the same as יראה (awe) and קונה הכל (Owner of all). Because Rashbi and his son lived with true awe of Hashem, recognizing that He is Koneh Hakol, they were sustained even in the most extreme conditions.

The word חרוב (carob) shares the same letters as חרב (Horev, another name for Sinai). This hints that when a person is fully toiling in Torah, like at Sinai, Hashem will sustain them miraculously. The Rambam explains that our awareness of Hashem determines our connection to Him. He compares this to the sun. It is always shining, but clouds or night can block its light.

The sun represents Hashem. His light is always present, but when we are distracted or lack emunah, we create clouds that block that light. When we strengthen our emunah, Hashem's light of providence and blessing is revealed more fully in our lives.

Story of Emunah

There is a story which illustrates Rambam's idea. Rav Simchah Bunam of Peshischa was both a Rebbe and a pharmacist. He was informed that

the king's servant was coming to pick up an order for the king. Since Rav Bunam needed to be somewhere, he instructed his wife to give out the order.

When Rav Bunam returned, he realized that his wife had mixed up the medicine. If the king were to drink the wrong medicine, he would die, and Rav Bunam would be blamed.

Without hesitation, Rav Bunam assured his wife that everything is in the hands of Hashem. He went to pray. A few hours later, the servant returned. He apologized, explaining that his horse had fallen and the medicine was destroyed, and he requested a new order.

Rav Bunam smiled. Hashem had performed a great miracle, and neither the king nor his servant was aware of it.

This is the message of Shemitah: our emunah and thoughts determine how Hashem relates to us.

As Baba Sali said the secret to blessing is in the aleph bet. When there is Aleph, emunah, it brings Beit, berachah.

Challenge

Think of one area in your life where you need blessing. This week, speak to Hashem for two minutes each day, asking Him to help you see that He is the source of everything, and that salvation can come at any moment.

The Relationship That
Changes Everything

By: Reb Adam Klasner



There's a powerful Midrash in Shir HaShirim Rabbah (1:31). It tells of a couple who were married for ten years and had no children.

According to halacha, after ten years, there's a basis to separate. So they came to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, ready to divorce.

Not because they didn't care about each other, but because life wasn't working the way they hoped.

They wanted to build something. And it wasn't happening. So they were ready to let go.

But Rabbi Shimon didn't respond the way you would expect. He didn't say, "Okay, let's proceed."

He told them something shocking: "Just like you made a celebration when you got married, make a celebration now before you separate."

It's strange. A wedding is joy. A divorce is pain. Why would you mirror one with the other?

But they listened. They made a real seudah. Food, drink, a full celebration.

In the middle of the night, the husband, after drinking, turns to his wife and says: "Take whatever is most precious in this house, and bring it with you."

She could have taken anything. Instead, she waited until he fell asleep and had him carried to her father's house.

When he woke up, confused, he asked her, "What did you do?"

She said, "You told me to take the most precious thing. There is nothing more precious to me than you."

They went back to Rabbi Shimon. He davened for them. And they had a child.

But the question is obvious. Why didn't Rabbi Shimon just daven in the beginning?

Why this whole process? Because something had to shift first.

There was a blockage. Not in the circumstance. In the relationship itself.

Until that moment, their connection had an agenda. Even a good one. Even a holy one.

They were together to build something. To create something.

And when that didn't happen, the relationship itself started to feel like it was falling apart.

What Rabbi Shimon did was strip that away. He brought them to a moment where everything external was about to collapse.

And then something deeper came out. Not "what are we going to build together?" But "do I choose you?"

Not because of what comes from it. Not because of what it produces. But simply because you are you.

"There is nothing more precious to me than you." That is a completely different relationship.

And only from that place could something new be born.

And this is not just about marriage. This is about how we live.

So much of life becomes transactional. I'll do this so I get that. I'll show up so something works out.

Even in our relationship with Hashem. We daven for outcomes. We do mitzvos for results.

But there's a deeper place in the soul. A place that says something much simpler.

"I want You." Not what You give me. Not what comes from this. Just You.

That's what the pasuk means: "Whom do I have in heaven, and with You I want nothing on earth."

Even heaven isn't the goal. The relationship itself is.

And when a person lives like that, something opens. The pressure drops. The blockage begins to dissolve.

Because the relationship is no longer carrying expectation. It's real. It's present.

And from that place, life starts to flow again. In



relationships. In emotions. In connection.

We're coming into Lag BaOmer. The day of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai.

A day of fire. A day of inner truth.

What he gave us is not just a story. It's a way of living.

To be able to say, in the middle of everything, right now, I have something complete.

Because I have the relationship itself. And that is the most precious thing there is.

Before the Fall

By: Rabbi Nachum Aaron Kutnowski



In Parshas Behar, the Torah introduces a quiet but profound obligation:

"And when your brother becomes poor and his means fall while he is with you, you shall strengthen him... and your brother shall live with you" (Vayikra 25:35-36).

The key word in Lashon Kodesh is וְהִחֲזַקְתָּ - "you shall strengthen him." The Netziv explains this concisely: the Torah's instruction here is not simply to give Tzedakah, but to extend a loan - to shore up a person's footing before it gives way entirely (HaEmek Davar on Vayikra 25:35).

The Gemara in Shabbos shares a quote by Rabbi Abba in the name of Reish Lakish: one who loans another money is greater than one who gives him charity. And greater still is one who enters into a partnership with a person in need (Shabbos 63a). Rashi there explains that it is of a higher form of help because it preserves the person's dignity.

The Or HaChaim HaKodesh takes this a step further still. He reads the very same verse not only as a command for financial, but of spiritual assistance too. "If your brother becomes poor" refers to a person whose inner light has dimmed. There is no more impoverished person, the Or HaChaim writes, than one who lacks Torah and Mitzvos. And "you shall strengthen him" becomes a directive to help this person do Teshuvah, to restore the Neshama to its proper elevated place (Or HaChaim on Vayikra 25:35).

We can apply the same principle of dignity to the idea of the Or HaChaim too. Just as the highest form of financial help is one that spares a person from shame, the highest form of spiritual assistance is offered quietly, before a person has fully fallen, before they are forced to confront their distance publicly. The Torah's call to וְהִחֲזַקְתָּ extends beyond the wallet and into the soul. The greatest Tzedakah is noticing when a person's light is beginning to fade, and caring enough to help them find their way back, before the fall.

Depleted Is Not Defeated!

By: Rabbi Avrohom Jacks



Parshas Behar contains a promise so audacious, so contrary to nature, that our intellects simply cannot process it. And, yet, it is precisely the second we stop trying to understand and to control, that miracles are unleashed.

In the parsha, we learn the concept of the "shemita year." G-d commands the Jewish farmer to lay down his tools and walk away from his land for an entire year, every 7th year of a seven-year cycle.

There is to be no plowing. No planting. The year before the 7th year, the ground is as depleted as it will ever be. The soil has weakened across six

relentless years of cultivation. And it is exactly at that moment, G-d declares, "I will command My blessing upon you in the 6th year, and it shall bring forth the equivalent of three years of produce."

By every measure of human reason, this should be impossible. The land is at its most exhausted, and yet G-d promises its most staggering output; three full years of harvest obtained in a single year.

How amazing is the farmer who sees the reality of his fields and yet willingly turns his back on a potential harvest, risking his family's very survival, all because of an invisible promise. It is this breathtaking display of trust and vulnerability that triggers the blessing.

Perhaps, right now, you feel like the farmer in his 6th year. The weight of accumulated effort sits heavily on your shoulders. You have been planting and grinding, showing up day after day, and the ground beneath you feels thin and spent. Your mind runs its quiet calculations, and the numbers are not encouraging. But the shemita commandment speaks directly to those moments of quiet desperation.

The shemita commandment assures us that the miracle is already waiting. It asks only one thing from you. Decide, fully, with everything on the line, that the supernatural yield is indeed already on its way. Your faith in G-d doesn't need to make sense. After all, the control that we so desperately cling to was always an illusion. So, make the boldest declaration a human being can make, by walking away from the field. Rest assured, that as improbable as it seems, three years of bounty are already growing in the soil of your faith.

Behar, Lag B'Omer & the Mann — Letting Go Reveals Light

By: Reb Yacov Aboudi



At the start of Parshat Behar, the Torah teaches: כִּי לִי הָאָרֶץ — "The land is Mine." (Vayikra 25:23)

As Rashi explains: "כִּי גֵרִים וְתוֹשְׁבִים אִתְּם עֹמְדִי" — You are not true owners, only with Hashem.

The Sforno adds that this awareness allows a person to release attachment to material permanence. We think we own. The Torah says we're entrusted.

The Illusion We Live With
We build, plan, and push forward, and begin to believe: "My success depends on me."

We naturally overestimate how much control we have. We feel pressure to manage everything. We struggle when outcomes don't align.

We tighten our grip instead of releasing it. The tighter we hold, the more pressure we feel.

Shemittah: A Reset

Shemittah interrupts that belief.

Six years: act, build, invest. Seventh year: stop, release, trust.

The Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah 84) explains that Shemittah trains a person to internalize that sustenance comes from Hashem, not from effort alone.

Do your part, then let go.

Parashat HaMann — Daily Letting Go

This same lesson appears in Parashat HaMann.

The manna fell daily, but with one condition: לֹא יָלָא יוֹתִירוּ מִמֶּנּוּ עַד בֹּקֶר — Do not leave over until morning. (Shemot 16:19)

And those who tried to hold on, it spoiled.

As Rashi explains, this trained Bnei Yisrael to trust that tomorrow's sustenance would come.

I recently started saying Parashat HaMann regularly, not as a segulah, but as a reminder:

You don't hold tomorrow. You show up today. Shemittah teaches trust every seven years. The Mann teaches it every single day.

Enter Lag B'Omer — The Light

Lag B'Omer is a day of revelation. The Zohar teaches: light is present but concealed.

The Connection

Behar teaches: free yourself of needing to own everything. The Mann teaches: let go of needing to be in control. Lag B'Omer teaches: when you let go, you are revealing the light.

The Arizal explains that divine flow, shefa, only enters where there is space.

As long as we are filled with "I control," "I need to secure everything," and "It all depends on me," there is no room. Letting go creates space. Space allows light.

The Zera Shimshon explains that when a person recognizes that what they have is not truly theirs, they become a vessel for blessing.

They move from control to trust. Anxiety to responsibility. Ego to clarity.

Living This Daily

You don't need a full Shemittah. Just a mini-Shemittah.

Act fully, but drop panic. Plan, but accept uncertainty. Try. Hishtadlus is integral, but don't cling.

Like the Mann, just for today.

Behar teaches you to let go. The Mann trains you daily. Lag B'Omer shows you what appears when you do. Letting go isn't losing control so much as it is making space for light.

Growing With Purpose

By: Reb Yanki Flusberg



Parshas Behar-Bechukosai always carries a powerful message about growth and responsibility. The Torah tells us, וְהָיָה אִחִיךָ עִמָּךְ — "your brother shall live with you." Chazal teach that true greatness is not only in how a person serves Hashem for himself, but in how he helps another Yid stand strong as well.

A birthday is a time to reflect on the gift of another year of life and to ask, "Am I growing only for myself, or am I helping bring chizuk to those around me?" Just as Shemittah reminds us to place our trust in Hashem, life reminds us that every year is another opportunity to strengthen our emunah, improve our middos, and make a greater impact on our family and community.

The greatest simcha of a birthday is not just marking another year, but using that year with purpose. May we all be zocheh to continue growing in Torah, yiras Shamayim, and ahavas Yisroel.

