

Seuda Shlishis, Parshas Re'ay, 5766

At the third Shabbos meal, Mohorosh *Shlit"á* spoke inspiring words on the meaning of the verse (*Tehillim*, Ch. 95): “Today, if you would hearken to His voice”, based on *Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 272.

Rebbe Nachman says: “It is written: ‘Today, if you would hearken to His voice.’ This is a great rule in the service of Hashem; that is, one should place before one’s eyes only *this* day. Whether it is concerning a person’s livelihood or other physical needs, he should not worry that he may lack what he needs tomorrow. The same thing applies to serving Hashem. He should place before his eyes only *this* day and *this* moment. For when he wishes to begin serving Hashem, it seems as though it is a huge burden which is impossible to carry. But, if he would think that all he has is *this* day alone, the heavy burden will disappear; and he won’t put off till tomorrow what he can do today, saying, ‘tomorrow I will pray with concentration and with the proper strength, etc’...For a person has in his world only *this* day and *this* moment in which he is currently living, for tomorrow is another world entirely. ‘*Today*, if you would hearken to His voice’ – precisely ‘*today*.’” (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman).

Mohorosh explained that this teaching of Rebbe Nachman’s is one of the most important foundations of a person’s life. If one places before his eyes only the day in which he presently lives, then he will be able to accept upon himself every kind of spiritual and physical work, since for just one day it is possible to do it all – to fill this one day with much Torah, prayer and good deeds. And this advice will undoubtedly lead to great success in life.

The main reason a person becomes lax in his service of Hashem and in any other type of work is because he worries about tomorrow and thinks, “Even if I will learn and pray a lot today, who can guarantee that I will be strong enough to do this again tomorrow?” And this is why he is neglectful in his service even today. In fact, this thinking will also prevent him from beginning anything good. Since there is no guarantee that he will be able to do it again tomorrow, it’s not worth even starting. However, if he would place before his eyes only today, not worrying about what will be tomorrow, he will see how successful he can actually be.

This rule also applies to the material world. Even the poorest Jew usually has enough food and money for today. However, the main cause of one's distress and worry is thinking, "What will be tomorrow? What will I eat tomorrow? What will I eat the day after tomorrow?" And then there is a person who has enough provisions for this week, but he worries about what he will eat next week. There are those who have provisions for the entire month, but they worry about what they will have next month. And there are those who have provisions for many months and even for many years, but they still worry about what will be after that. So we find that the entire cause of a person's worrying is his thinking about tomorrow. But if he would focus on just today, he will lack nothing. Therefore, the more a person accustoms himself to thinking, "**Today**, if you would hearken to His voice", the more he will succeed and live a good and sweet life.

In truth, every single day that a person has is a wondrous gift from Hashem and he is able to fill this day with an abundance of true and eternal good. Each and every day, the Hidden Light reveals itself and through this light a person can get a taste of the pleasures of *Gan Eden*. But what holds a person back from this good? - The snakes and scorpions that encircle and surround the day, and that want to prevent a person from reaching the Hidden Light within it (*Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 84). These snakes and scorpions are the alien thoughts and confusions that besiege a person, not allowing him to focus on today. Instead, they overwhelm him with thoughts and worries about tomorrow and this tears him away from today's brilliant Hidden Light. All of this is the counsel of Amalek, about whom it is said (*Shemos*, Ch. 17): "Go out and fight against Amalek **tomorrow**." The entire basis of his impure advice is "tomorrow": "Tomorrow you will start learning." "Tomorrow you will start praying." His goal is to get a person to neglect today, and to completely despair from being able to do anything today. And so he comes to a person every day and pushes off his life till tomorrow. But we must fight against Amalek and say to him the exact opposite of what he says to us: "Tomorrow I will obey you!" "Tomorrow I will do as you say!" "But I am giving today to Hashem! And today I will do all I can, in Torah, prayer, mitzvos and good deeds!" And thus, we must push him off from one day to the next. And in this way, we will fill each and every day with true and eternal good, and live a truly good and sweet life.

On the mystical level, within the word "*HaYom* (today)" is hidden an amazing secret. The essence of our service of Hashem is to connect the

spiritual and the material together, in other words, to have a perception of the future world within the materialism of this world. It was for this purpose that the entire universe was created, as it is stated in the *Zohar (Parshas Bo, 42a)*: “The entire creation was brought into being in order that we recognize Hashem”, that is, so that we would merit to find Hashem within each and every detail of creation and to unify His blessed Name (i.e. His divine attributes) with all of our actions. The spiritual, i.e. perceptions of G-dliness, is hinted at in the four-letter name of Hashem – *Yud-Kay-Vav-Kay*. The explanation of this Name is “He was, is and will be”. This is the spiritual – Hashem’s G-dliness which brings into existence and constantly sustains the entire creation, from the first and highest of all worlds to the last and lowest of all worlds. The material world and the running of Nature are hinted at in the name *Elokim*, whose gematria (numerical value of the letters) is the same as that of the word *HaTeva* (Nature). For with the name *Elokim*, Hashem runs and directs Nature, and he clothes His G-dliness within the materiality of creation. Before the First Man sinned with the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, G-dliness was revealed without any screens or coverings, as it is written (Bereishis, Ch. 2): “And they were both naked...and they were not ashamed.” For they saw G-dliness revealed from each and every detail of creation, as our holy Sages have said (*Midrash Bereishis Rabbah, 20:12*): “In the ‘Torah of Rabbi Meir’ it was written: “And Hashem G-d made for Adam and for his wife garments of light - *aleph-vav-reish* [however, in the Torah it is actually written ‘garments of skin - *ayain-vav-reish*, but Rabbi Meir changed the *ayin* to an *aleph*]”, for every covering and garment was a piece of G-d’s revealed light. However, after the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, the light was hidden, becoming “garments of skin” (skin represents a screen and a covering). Therefore, the essence of our service is to once again reveal the hidden light that exists in each detail of creation.

It is explained in the *Zohar* and in the writings of the Ariza”l that the essence of the sin of Adam was that he caused two separations: 1). A separation between the first two and the last two letters of the Tetragrammaton – that is, he separated *Yud-Hay* from *Vav-Hay*, and 2). A separation between the first three letters and the last two letters of the name *Elokim* – that is, he separated *Aleph-Lamed-Hay* from *Yud-Mem*. The letters *Yud-Hay* represent the holy intellectual faculties of *Chochma* and *Bina* which give us the ability to contemplate and perceive G-dliness from all of the details of creation. But when a person blemishes these holy intellectual faculties by following his own understanding, the letters *Yud-Hay* become separated from the letters *Vav-Hay*, leaving *Vav-Hay* by itself. All of our service is about returning the

Vav-Hay to the *Yud-Hay*. And this is the meaning of the “*Le’sheim Yichud*” prayer: “...to unite the name *Yud-Hay* with *Vav-Hay* in complete unity”.

This also applies to the letters of the name *Elokim*. The goal is that the letters *Aleph-Lamed-Hay* be attached to the letters *Yud-Mem* in order to recognize “Who created these” – “Who (spelled *Mem-Yud*) created these (*Aleph-Lamed-Hay* – these)”, as it is written (Isaiah, Ch. 40): “Raise your eyes on high, and see Who created these”. The word “these (*Aleph-Lamed-Hay*)” represents the material world, those things which we can see and point to in the physical world. And *Mem-Yud* represents the Fifty Gates of Understanding (*Mem-Yud* has the *gematria* of 50). And through these Fifty Gates we can comprehend and come to the recognition of “Who created these”. However, as a result of Adam’s sin, the letters *Aleph-Lamed-Hay* became separated from the letters *Mem-Yud*. So, instead of seeing Hashem from within the material world, Adam and Chava blemished their *emunah* and fell into the destruction of *avoda zara* (idolatry) which is also referred to by the word “these (*Aleph-Lamed-Hay*)”, as it is written (Shemos, Ch. 32): “*These (Aleph-Lamed-Hay)* are your gods, O Israel.” Therefore, the essence of our service each and every day is to return these letters to their proper place, and to recognize Hashem from every detail of our “today”. And “today (*HaYom*)” are the letters *Vav-Hay* and *Yud-Mem*; that is, we need to return the letters *Vav-Hay* to the letters *Yud-Hay* and the letters *Yud-Mem* to the letters *Aleph-Lamed-Hay*, which is the secret of the verse (*Bereishis*, Ch. 3): “And they heard the sound of Hashem (*Yud-Hay -Vav-Hay*) *Elokim (Aleph-Lamed-Hay-Yud-Mem)* moving in the garden towards the spirit of today (*HaYom*)”, for Adam’s sin caused the two names, Hashem and *Elokim*, to be separated from the “spirit of today (*HaYom*)”, for now the letters of “today (*HaYom*)” - *Hay-Yud-Vav-Mem* - are separated from these two divine Names. And the essence of our service is to return them to their original places.

Mohorosh connected the above ideas to our parsha in the following way. In the opening verse of the parsha, Moshe Rebbeinu says to the Children of Israel (*Devarim*, Ch. 11): “See, I place before you today a blessing and a curse.” What is the explanation of the word “today” in this verse? It appears to be unnecessary since the verse is speaking about the blessings and curses that would be said on Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Eival (as Rashi explains on this verse), and this ceremony would only be performed later after they had entered the Land of Israel under the leadership of Joshua. Let’s try to answer this question according to the above teachings of Rebbe Nachman.

The word “today” in this verse alludes to the verse “Today, if you would hearken to His voice”. Moshe Rebbeinu is teaching us the secret to a successful life, namely, if we would only focus on the day we are currently living in, not worrying about what will be tomorrow, we will be successful in every matter, spiritually and materially. And this is “See, I place before you **today** a blessing and a curse” – “I am giving over to you the power of ‘today’, which means to focus on each day unto itself and not to confuse yourselves with the next day at all.” And this is an awesome secret for a successful life; for one who fulfills this with simplicity will have a “blessing”. But one who disregards this will have a “curse”, G-d forbid.

The wicked also utilize the advice of “today”, but to their detriment, saying (Isaiah, Ch. 22): “Let us eat and drink [today], for tomorrow we shall die.” Therefore, “The blessing: that you hearken to the mitzvos of Hashem, your G-d, that I command you ‘**today**’”, for if you place Hashem before your eyes when you serve Him “**today**”, you will succeed greatly and merit to learn much Torah and draw down upon yourselves all of the blessings, which is “The blessing: that you hearken”, the final letters of which spell the word ‘Torah’ (as brought in the Baal HaTurim). But the opposite, “And the curse: if you do not hearken to the mitzvos of Hashem, your G-d, and you turn away from the path that I command you - ‘today’ ” – the main curse is the turning away from “today”, which means to worry about what will be tomorrow, and this will not bring any blessings to a person’s life, G-d forbid – “if you do not hearken to the mitzvos”, the final letters of which spell “*el maves* (to death)”, for without the advice of “Today, if you would hearken to His voice”, a person is in danger of destroying his days and years, G-d forbid.

Most years, we read parshas Re’eh before *Rosh Chodesh Elul*, the month of *teshuva*, for the essence of *teshuva* is to return to filling each day with an abundance of true and eternal good. And even if all year long we did not treat each day with the proper care, now is the time to do *teshuva* for this and to fulfill “Today, if you would hearken to His voice” – to fill each day with much Torah, prayer, mitzvos and good deeds. May Hashem help us to properly watch over all of our days and years, and may we merit to elevate and connect them to Hashem, to be included in Him completely, for now and evermore. *Amen v’amen.*