



Adapted from the sefer **חמין במוצאי שבת** and **חדוותא דזעיר אנפין** collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Seuda Shlishis Matos - Masei
חדוותא דזעיר אנפין עמ' תמ"ו

In Parshas *Masei*, Hashem warns *Bnei Yisrael*:

ולא תטמא את הארץ אשר אתם יושבים בה אשר אני שכן בתוכה כי אני ה' שכן בתוך בני ישראל (במדבר ל"ה:ל"ד).

Do not defile the Land in which you reside, in which I dwell, for I am Hashem who dwells among *Bnei Yisrael*.

Rashi explains that the phrase **ישראל בני שכן בתוך בני** means:
"Even when they are *tamei*, the *Shechina* is among them."

However, this beautiful concept was already stated in *Parshas Acharei Mos*:

וכפר על הקדש מטמאת בני ישראל ומפשעיהם לכל חטאתם וכן יעשה לאהל מועד השכן אתם בתוך טמאתם (ויקרא ט"ז:ט"ז).

Who dwells with them amongst their *tumah*.

Rashi explains the phrase **השכן אתם בתוך טמאתם** - exactly as he did in our *Parsha*. "Even though they are *tamei*, the *shechina* is among them." We need to understand why the Torah repeats this message that already appeared in *Sefer Vayikra*.

It seems that the repetition can be explained as follows. The *pasuk* in *Acharei - Mos* refers to a period when the *Mishkan* and *Beis Hamikdash* are standing. The presence of the *Mikdash* elevated *Bnei Yisrael*, and the *avoda* of *Yom Kippur* enabled them to atone for their sins. Therefore, the



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Torah states, that if they become *tamei*, the *shechina* dwells among them because the *avoda* of the *Mikdash* enabled them to be a fitting vessel for the *shechina*.

However, the *pasuk* in our *Parsha* refers to the period after the destruction of the *Mikdash*, our long and bitter *galus*. We have been persecuted, pursued, and impoverished both physically and spiritually. We, the final generations before *Mashiach*, are but a shadow of *Am Yisrael's* former greatness. It is for us that the Torah repeated the message that no matter what, Hashem dwells among us.

Every Jew can derive strength and encouragement from the repetition of that *pasuk*. It tells him that even if he has descended to the lowest levels imaginable, the *shechina* is with him. Hashem never abandons us, and therefore, our suffering is also His suffering.

We must pay attention to an important difference between the two *pesukim*. In *Parshas Acharei Mos*, the *pasuk* tells us that Hashem is **השכן אתם בתוך טמאתם** - He dwells among them even when they are *tamei*. However, the *pasuk* in our *Parsha* concludes, **כי אני ה' שכן בתוך בני ישראל** - For I am Hashem who dwells within Bnei Yisrael. This implies that there is a precondition that must be fulfilled if we are to benefit from the presence of the *shechina* among us.

In *Maseches Brachos* (כ"א:), *Chazal* teach us that a *davar she'bikedusha*, such as *Kadish*, can only be said in the presence of a *minyan*. They learn this from the *pasuk*, **ונקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל** - And I will be sanctified within *Bnei Yisrael*. (ויקרא כ"ב:ל"ב).

The phrase **בתוך בני ישראל**, refers to a *tzibur*, ten Jewish men who have gathered together to serve Hashem with united minds and hearts, and certainly without *machlokes*. The word **בתוך** usually refers to that which is contained inside a **כלי** - a vessel. *Sefarim Hakedoshim* point out that the word **כלי** is an anagram of **להניח לימים ישראלים** representing a united *Am Yisrael*. When all different types of Jews join together with one mind and



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one heart, they form a vessel in which the *shechina* can dwell. When we unite without arrogance and condescension, the *shechina* will dwell within even the last and lowest generation.

This is symbolized by the last letters of **בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** which spell the word **כלי**.

This theme also appears in the story of *Bnei Reuven* and *Bnei Gad* when they commit to leading the conquest of *Eretz Yisrael*. **נָחֲנוּ נֶעְבַר חִלּוּצִים לְפָנָי**. ה' אָרַץ כְּנָעַן. The *Baal Haturim* points out that the unusual form **נָחֲנוּ** instead of **אָנַחְנוּ** appears only three times in the *mesorah*. The other two are:

כָּלֵנוּ בְּנֵי אִישׁ אֶחָד נָחֲנוּ - We are all sons of one man (בראשית כ"א:)

נָחֲנוּ פָשַׁעְנוּ וּמְרִינוּ - We have sinned and rebelled (איכה ג:מ"ב)

We can explain the progression of the three *pesukim* in the following way;

If we achieve the goal of true unity - **כָּלֵנוּ בְּנֵי אִישׁ אֶחָד נָחֲנוּ**, then even if we have sinned to the extent of **נָחֲנוּ פָשַׁעְנוּ וּמְרִינוּ**, we can go forth and break free of all *tzaros* and limitations, **נָחֲנוּ נֶעְבַר חִלּוּצִים**.

Especially during the Three Weeks, we must emphasize the necessity of unity and *shalom*. We must certainly do all that we can to avoid *machlokes*, jealousy, and hatred., for those evils destroyed the *Beis Hamikdash* and exiled us from our land. All of the suffering that *Am Yisrael* has gone through in this long, bitter *galus* results from *sinas chinam*, and that hatred remain an obstacle that prevents our redemption.

Tzadikim have said that the terrible *churban* that took place in Europe during World War II, in which millions of our brethren were tortured and murdered, was also caused by bitter *machlokes* that was prevalent in various communities. Only in the death camps did all Jews unite as brothers in suffering.



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It is sad and shameful that the *yetzer* of *machlokes*, jealousy and hatred wreak destruction in the communities of *frum* Jews, *chareidim l'dvar Hashem*. One group announces that their way of *avodas Hashem* is the only correct way. They then criticize and besmirch other groups, expressing their terrible jealousy and hatred. Sometimes, they pursue and persecute those who disagree with them, and do anything possible to destroy their reputations.

One of the non-kosher birds listed in *Parshas Shemini* is the *chasida*. Rashi explains that this bird deserves such a noble name because it does *chesed* with חברותיה - its fellow birds.

The *Chidushei Ha'rim zy"v* asked, "If this bird is known for acts of *chesed*, why is it an עוף טמא - a non-kosher bird"? He answered that we see in Rashi that it only does *chesed* with חברותיה - with members of its own group. That limitation is the reason that the Torah designates it as *tamei*.

So too, the *tahara* of a Jew is expressed by doing *chesed* with every Jew, wherever he may be.

The well-known Gerer *chasid*, R' Eliezer Hendeles *zt"l* told me a story that illustrates the true approach to *chesed*.

The *Lev Simcha zy"v* invested much time and effort into doing everything possible to lower the price of apartments in Israel. One day, R' Eliezer came to the Rebbe and delivered the good news that after a long struggle, the city of Ashdod allocated a significant amount of low-cost housing to the Gerer community.

The *Lev Simcha* however, didn't rejoice. With a look of pain on his face he told R' Eliezer, "I thought that you were my close friend! I now see that you haven't begun to understand me. Did you really believe that my goal was to provide Gerer *chasidim* with cheap housing? I was thinking about soldiers who finish their army service. If they see that the price of



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housing is beyond their means, they may move to *chutz la'aretz* and, G-d forbid assimilate and intermarry! Did you think that my mind was focused on myself and my community?"

R' Eliezer said that for a long time afterwards, he could still sense the pain he had caused the *Lev Simcha* by suspecting him of caring exclusively for his community.

Now is the time to wake up and throw ourselves into the entire *klal* of *Am Yisrael, Kohanim, Leviim, and Yisraelim*. We should begin by taking down the walls that separate us even from other G-d fearing Jews. Then, despite being the lowliest of generations, the *Shechina* will dwell among us, as the *pasuk* says **כִּי אֲנִי ה' שֹׁכֵן בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**.

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