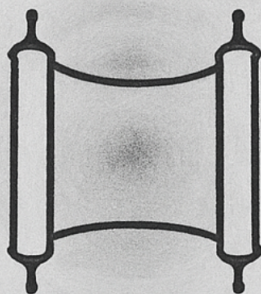


בס"ד

Reb Pinchas of Koretz

Imrie Pinchas

Parshas Matos



Dedicated To:

ר' נחום אהרן & חיה

ליטשקאווסקי

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Siman #367

"Avenge the vengeance of the children of Israel; afterward you shall be gathered to your people" (Numbers 31:2).

For the tzaddik does not depart from this world until he fulfills a great mitzvah, and through this he cleaves to the Shechinah.

And the wicked man is the opposite—he does not die until he commits a great sin, and his measure becomes full, etc.

נָקוּם נִקְמַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אַחֲרֵי תִאֲסַף אֶל עַמִּיךָ ל"א, ב'

כִּי הַצַּדִּיק אֵינוֹ נִפְטָר מִהָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה עַד שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה מִצְוָה גְּדוֹלָה, וּבְזֶה נִדְבֵק בְּשִׁכִּינָה

וְהַרְשָׁע בְּהֶפֶךְ, אֵינוֹ מֵת עַד שֶׁעוֹשֶׂה עֲבֵרָה גְּדוֹלָה, וְנִתְמַלֵּא סָאתוֹ וְכוּ'

[NOTE Summary:

This teaching from Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz focuses on the final moments of a person's life and reveals a powerful spiritual principle: A tzaddik (righteous person) does not depart this world until they have completed one final, great mitzvah, through which they become fully united with the Shechinah (Divine Presence). This moment is not incidental it is intentional and redemptive. In contrast, a rasha (wicked person) does not die until he commits a final, defining sin that "fills his measure," sealing his moral state. These two paths mitzvah or aveirah determine the spiritual imprint of one's final moments and whether they depart attached to holiness or distance.

Practical Takeaway:

Each moment of life holds weight, especially as we age or face moments of transition. Instead of fearing our end, we can prepare for it with consciousness and holiness—by ensuring that our lives end in connection to the Divine. Every good deed might be the one that binds us forever to G-d. We should never undervalue even a single mitzvah, especially in the later chapters of life.

Chassidic Story:

Before the passing of the holy Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev, he requested a candle, a tallis, and his tefillin. "Let me do one more mitzvah," he whispered. "Let me kiss the King one more time." As his strength waned, he wrapped himself in the tallis, placed the tefillin on his head and arm with trembling hands, and recited Shema Yisrael with radiant joy. Only afterward did his soul leave his body in peace. His disciples later said, "He left this world exactly as he lived—fused to Hashem." **END NOTE]**

Siman #368

"Afterwards you shall be gathered to your people"

(Bamidbar 31:2). In the name of the Rav, of blessed memory, that it is stated in the Zohar (Tikkunei Zohar 114a, 6) that the extension of Moshe Rabbeinu exists in every generation and within every sage—see there.

אַחֲרֵי תִאֲסַף אֶל עַמִּיךָ (ל"א, ב'). בְּשֵׁם הָרַב ז"ל דְּאִיתָא בְּזוֹהַר (תִּיקּוּנֵי זוֹהַר קי"ד, ו') דְּאִתְפְּשָׁטוּתָא דְּמֹשֶׁה רַבֵּינוּ בְּכָל דָּרָא וְדָרָא וּבְכָל חֲכִים עֵי"ש

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And no sage is able to innovate a new matter until the aspect of Moshe is clothed within him. For everything that an accomplished student is destined to innovate was already said to Moshe (Yerushalmi Peah 2:4).

Therefore, it is impossible to innovate [without Moshe]. It turns out that the aspect of Moshe exists eternally within Israel. And this is [the meaning of] “you shall be gathered to your people” precisely—that you (Moshe) will forever remain within the people of Israel.

[NOTE Summary:

This teaching reveals that Moshe Rabbeinu’s soul never departs from the Jewish people. Drawing on the Zohar and Yerushalmi, it explains that in every generation, Moshe’s spiritual essence is present within the sages and scholars of the time. No Torah insight can be revealed unless the aspect of Moshe becomes invested in the thinker, since all future Torah innovations were already transmitted to Moshe at Sinai. Thus, the verse “you shall be gathered to your people” is precise—it means that Moshe, even in death, is eternally embedded within *his people*, the nation of Israel.

Practical Takeaway:

When learning Torah or seeking insight, one should remember that they are connecting not only with the Divine but also with the chain of transmission that flows through Moshe Rabbeinu. This awareness can bring humility and awe to our study—every authentic chiddush (new Torah idea) is, in essence, a spark of Moshe’s eternal light manifesting through us. We must approach Torah with reverence, realizing we are tapping into something ancient, sacred, and ever-present.

END NOTE]

Siman #369

“And Moshe wrote their goings forth according to their journeys by the word of Hashem, and these are their journeys according to their goings forth” (Bamidbar 33:2).

From the mouth of the Rav of Shpitovka, of blessed memory, in the name of the Rav, of blessed memory, who said that this reversal is difficult.

However, there are places in the journeys that were named after the sin of Israel, such as *Kivros HaTa'avah* and *Rismon*, as Rashi explains.

ואין חכים יכול לחדש דבר עד שנתלבש בו בחינת משה, כי כל מה שתלמיד ותיק עתיד לחדש נאמר למשה ירושלמי פאה ג', ד'

ולכן אי אפשר לחדש. נמצא שבחינת משה יש לעולם בתוך ישראל, וזה תאסוף אל "עמוד" דייקא, שתהיה לעולם בתוך עם ישראל

ויכתב משה את מוצאייהם למסעיהם על פי ה' ואלה מסעיהם למוצאייהם (לג, ג). מפי הרב דשפעטובקא ז"ל בשם הרב ז"ל, שאמר דקשה שנוי הנ"ל

אבל יש מקומות במסעות שנקראו על שם החטא דישראל, כמו קברות התאווה ורתמה כפירוש רש"י

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And Moshe loved Israel (Menachos 65a), so he attributed the sins to the places — “their goings forth according to their journeys.”

ומֹשֶׁה הָיָה אוֹהֵב לְיִשְׂרָאֵל (מְנַחוֹת ס"ה, ל), וְתָלָה
"הַחֲטָאִים בְּמָקוֹמוֹת — "מוֹצְאֵיהֶם לְמַסְעֵיהֶם

And Scripture testifies in truth: “And these are their journeys according to their goings forth,” meaning that the sins indeed gave the places their names.

וְהַכָּתוּב מַעֲיד שֶׁהוּא בָּאֵמֶת — "וְאֵלֶּה מַסְעֵיהֶם
לְמוֹצְאֵיהֶם", עַל שֶׁהַחֲטָאִים נִקְרְאוּ הַמָּקוֹמוֹת כִּךְ

Another explanation: For there must always be smallness (katnus) before greatness (gadlus).

עוֹד יֵשׁ לוֹמַר, כִּי תָמִיד צָרִיךְ לִהְיוֹת הַקְטָנוֹת קוֹדֵם
לְגִדּוּלָה

Only sometimes greatness comes afterward *because* the person was in such deep smallness,

רַק לְפַעֲמִים בָּא הַגִּדּוּלָה אַחֲר־כֵּךְ בְּעֵבוֹר שֶׁהָיָה
בְּקָטָנוֹת כָּל כֵּךְ

and sometimes smallness comes in order to bring greatness afterward.

וּלְפַעֲמִים בָּא הַקְטָנוֹת בְּכַדִּי שֶׁיָּבוֹא אַחֲ"כ הַגִּדּוּלָה

And in another place this is explained more clearly.

וּבְמָקוֹם אַחֵר מְבוֹאֵר יוֹתֵר

The Targum rendered *masaeihem* (their journeys) as “mitlanyeihon,” and on their *masaam* (journey) as “mitulam” (falling, cast down). See R’tz.

הַתַּרְגוּם פִּרְשׁ מַסְעֵיהֶם "מִטְּלָנִיֵּיהוֹן" וְעַל מַסָּעָם פִּרְשׁ
"מִטּוּלָם" רַט

One can say that *masaeihem* refers to the exile, [as] the word *masah* (journey) relates to *matulah* (falling), according to the Targum.

יֵשׁ לוֹמַר, שֶׁמַּסְעֵיהֶם נִקְרָא הַגָּלוּת לְשׁוֹן "מִטּוּלָא"
כַּהַתְרַגּוּם

And their *motza'ehem* (goings forth) refers to the emergence from exile.

הַיִּצִּיאָה, וּמוֹצְאֵיהֶם נִקְרָא מִהַגָּלוּת

Therefore, Moshe wrote that the redemption came because of the exile,

לְכֵךְ מֹשֶׁה הָיָה כּוֹתֵב שֶׁהִיָּתָה הַנִּצָּאָה עֲבוּר הַגָּלוּת

but the verse states the opposite: “And these are their journeys” — meaning the exile — “to their goings forth” — meaning that the exile was only in order that they would later be able to receive light upon exiting the exile.

וְהַכָּתוּב אוֹמֵר לִהְיוֹת — "וְאֵלֶּה מַסְעֵיהֶם" שֶׁהִיָּתָה
הַגָּלוּת רַק בְּכַדִּי שֶׁיּוֹכְלוּ לְקַבֵּל אַחֲ"כ אוֹר [בַּיִצִּיאָה
"מִן הַגָּלוּת, וְזֶהוּ "לְמוֹצְאֵיהֶם

[NOTE Summary:

Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz interprets the seeming shift in phrasing between "מוֹצְאֵיהֶם לְמַסְעֵיהֶם" (“their goings forth according to their journeys”) and "מַסְעֵיהֶם לְמוֹצְאֵיהֶם" (“their journeys according to their goings forth”) in Bamidbar 33:2. He explains that Moshe Rabbeinu, out of deep love for Israel, chose to write the sequence in a way that would attribute their sins to the places, not to the people essentially minimizing their blame. However, the Torah itself presents the opposite phrasing to reveal that these locations were indeed marked by the people’s actions. On a deeper level, this reversal hints at a profound spiritual truth: greatness is often preceded by smallness. Exile (“מַסְעֵיהֶם”) is not a punishment alone it serves as the groundwork for redemption (“מוֹצְאֵיהֶם”). The Targum supports this, interpreting “מַסְעֵיהֶם” as oppression and “מוֹצְאֵיהֶם” as redemption. Thus, Moshe

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emphasized that redemption justifies exile, while the Torah suggests that exile is necessary to prepare the vessel for redemptive light.

Practical Takeaway:

Challenges, spiritual downturns, and “exilic” phases in our personal lives often feel meaningless or even shameful. But Rabbi Pinchas teaches that these low points may be not only necessary but even precious they prepare us for the true “going forth” toward light and expansion. Instead of denying or escaping hardship, we can embrace it as part of a Divine process that leads us to clarity, renewal, and deeper connection with Hashem.

Chassidic Story:

A young chassid once came to Rabbi Pinchas of Koretz weeping. “Rebbe, I’ve fallen spiritually. I feel like I’ve ruined everything.” Rabbi Pinchas looked at him with compassion and said, “Do you know why there’s a descent? Not to fall—but to climb higher than you ever reached before.” The chassid asked, “But how do I know that’s true for me?” The Rebbe replied, “Because you’re crying. And tears are the first sparks of the redemption that’s waiting inside your exile.”

END NOTE]

Siman #370

“And Aharon the Kohen went up to Mount Hor” (Bamidbar

33:38). For the world of *hirhur* (contemplation) — “Hor HaHor” — is higher than the world of *machshavah* (thought).

And since he ascended to the world of contemplation, he automatically departed [from this world].

יַעַל אֶהְרֹן הַכֹּהֵן אֶל הַר הָהָר (ל"ג, ל"ח). כִּי עוֹלָם הַהִרְהוּר ("הַר הָהָר") גָּבוֹה מֵעוֹלָם הַמַּחְשָׁבָה

וּכְיוֹן שְׁעָלָה לְעוֹלָם הַהִרְהוּר, מִמִּילָא נִסְתַּלַּק

[NOTE Summary:

This brief yet profound teaching draws from the verse “Aharon the Kohen ascended to Mount Hor” and reveals a hidden spiritual dimension. “Mount Hor” is interpreted not as a physical mountain alone, but as a symbol for *Olam HaHirhur* the inner world of contemplation and spiritual yearning that transcends even structured thought (*machshavah*). Aharon’s death is thus framed not as a descent but an ascent: he reached a state so elevated pure inner longing for G-d that it naturally led to the departure of his soul. The progression from thought to contemplation to spiritual dissolution reflects a return to the Source.

Practical Takeaway:

True spiritual elevation doesn’t always come through intellectual mastery it often comes through heartfelt yearning, inner movement, and sincere intention (*hirhur*). Moments of deep inner stirring even if they lack clarity can lift us beyond ordinary consciousness and connect us to G-d. When you feel an unexplainable pull toward something higher, don’t dismiss it. That *hirhur* may be holier than any defined thought. Embrace it as a sign of soul-ascent. **END NOTE]**