



Parashas Ki Teitzei

City	Candle-Lighting	Shabbos Ends
Jerusalem	6:13 PM	7:28 PM
Los Angeles	6:50 PM	7:44 PM
New York City	6:57 PM	7:54 PM
Chicago	6:50 PM	7:50 PM
London	7:11 PM	8:17 PM



Parasha Summary

- **אֶשֶׁת יִפְת־תָּאֵר, מִשְׁפֵּט הַבְּכֹרָה, בֵּן סוֹרֵר וּמוֹרֵה** The commandments that are intended to regulate private relationships such as family life (i.e. the laws concerning a captive gentile woman whom a Jewish soldier desires to marry, the double portion of inheritance due to one's firstborn son, the passage about the "rebellious son," and forbidden and restricted marriages).
- **הַשְּׁבֵת אֲבִידָה, הֶקֶם תְּקִים עִמוֹ, מַעֲקָה, רְבִית** Mitzvos that deal with Israel's civic life and interpersonal relationships (i.e. caring for another's property and returning lost objects, helping a fellow Jew load and unload a burden, laws of landowners and workers' compensation, fencing a roof, porch, or pit on one's property, and not charging interest).
- **לֹא-תִלְבַּשׁ, כְּלָאִים, צִיצִית** The prohibition of wearing clothes designed for the opposite gender, laws of not mixing species of plants or harnessing animals together on a yoke, and tzitzis)
- **זְכוֹר** The commandment to remember how God punished Miriam for speaking slander and another commandment to remember the evil which Amalek did to us.



Sefer HaChinuch Mitzvah Count

74 (The most Mitzvot of any Parsha in the Torah!)



Hashem Loves Us

וְלֹא אָבָה ד' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לִשְׁמַע אֶל בְּלַעַם וַיִּהְיֶה ד' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְךָ אֶת הַקְּלָלָה לְבִרְכָה כִּי אָהֲבָךָ ד' אֱלֹהֶיךָ

*"But Hashem, your God, refused to listen to Balaam, and Hashem, your God, reversed the curse to a blessing for you, **because Hashem, your God, loved you**" (Devarim 23:6).*

We learn from this verse how much Hashem truly loves us! (1) The *Ohr HaChaim* explains that although God could have found a reason for allowing Bilaam to curse the Jewish people seeing that they were guilty of sins, God decided to inhibit Bilaam from doing so, not because of Israel's merits, but solely out of His loving kindness and benevolence for them. Living with this awareness that God loves us, is constantly performing miracles and bestowing goodness upon us, and that every single good deed one does brings tremendous *nachas ruach* (pride) to Him – brings one to feel extremely high levels of *deveikus* (connection)! (2)

Interestingly, our verse repeats both of God's names three times [(1) **ד'** – representing the attribute of compassion and loving kindness and (2) **אֱלֹהֶיךָ** – the attribute of strict judgment]. As we say in the *Shema* (Devarim 6:4), "**ד' אֱלֹהֵינוּ, ד' אֶחָד**" ("*Hashem is our God, Hashem is one*"). Using both names of God in the verse, we are declaring the oneness of God and proclaiming that the attributes of kindness and strictness are both *Hashem Echad*, one and the same, all kindness. Everything that God does is kindness even though we may not always see or feel it as such. (3) This idea is crucial as we approach the *Yamim Noraim* (the Days of Awe), beginning with *Rosh Hashana* which is famously referred to as the "*Yom HaDin*" (the Day of Judgement). On this awesome day, God recalls all of His creations and judges their fate for the year ahead. Although *Rosh Hashana* is a day of judgment, it is also a day of festivity and joy because we are certain that the ultimate judge, who is our Father and our King, will judge us favorably despite our mishaps and our imperfections. Our Rabbis teach us in numerous places that God conceals Israel's sins and grants forgiveness. (4) As the verse in *Nechemia* (8: 9-10) states, "*Go, eat rich and fatty foods and drink sweet beverages and send gifts of food to those who have not prepared, for today is sanctified to our Lord. Do not be sad; for the joy of Hashem is your strength!*"

May Hashem help us always know and feel His constant love and try our best to be as dedicated in performing His will as He is always committed to bestowing goodness and blessing upon us.

Wishing you and your family a *Ketivah v'Chatima Tovah* and a *Shana Tova u'Metuka!*

(1) *Malbim, Sifri*; Amazingly, the *Malbim* points out and asks why it was even necessary to include the words, "*because Hashem, your God, loved you*" because it's so obvious! Of course Hashem loves us! (2) *Kedushas Levi, Kedushos for Purim, Kedusha Shlishis 24, Shlah HaKadosh Shnei Luchos HaBeris Torah Shebikhtav Balak Torah Ohr 1*; (3) *R' Abraham J. Twerski zt"l "Positive Parenting" p. 111-112; Be'er Mayim Chaim, Numbers 24:2:1; Likutei Halakhos, Orach Chaim, Laws of Reciting Shema 4:6:1 says that in the merit of Klal Yisrael's Emuna, reciting the Shema, and unifying Hashem's name brings blessing*; (4) For example, see *Pesikta Rabbasi 40 and Pesikta d' Rav Kahana; Yehuda Sherpin, See Tur, Orach Chaim 581, 597 and see also commentaries on Nehemiah 8:10 (i.e. Saadia Goan, Ibn Ezra)*; Note: Although there is a prohibition of fasting on *Rosh Hashana*, our Rabbis teach us that one still shouldn't eat to one's fill or act frivolously.



The Path to Hashem - Annotations and Elucidations on Sefer Chovos HaTalmidim | by R' Chaim Samuels א"א שליט"א author *הדרך אל ד'*

Translated by Aharon Mikail

THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTION: We each get a boost of inspiration at the start of the month of Elul, a new school year, beginning a zman in Yeshiva, or job. How does one keep the inspiration going?

The 2nd Week of Elul

It's that time of year again! In anticipation for Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, and the new year ahead, the month of Elul usually starts with a strong motivation for reflection and growth, and new *kabbalas* and resolutions.

How does one carry this passion and vigor to the rest of the month and the entire year?

The Rebbe of Piazetsna zt"l in his ethical work on self-development, *Chovas HaTalmidim* (Chapter 4, "How to Cure Laziness and Lethargy"), addresses this matter and writes that a person must always stay focused on their goals and never become broken or feel despaired by challenges or trials. One must come to the understanding that obstacles really bring about their greatest growth. The Rebbe gives an analogy of a stream of water that when interrupted midstream, flows even more rapidly in an effort to overcome the barrier in its way. In the same way, a diligent person is only strengthened with determination to actualize their goals despite the battles or obstacles placed in his way.

Challenge: In Chapter 5 of the *Chovas HaTalmidim*, the Piazetsna Rebbe gives practical advice and tactics on how to convert challenges for one's benefit. For example, map out and consider how much time your goal will take and regularly check your progress.



Timeless Tehillim Thoughts | by Ariella Rachel Mikail

Tehillim 27: Lean In

If you could ask for one thing from Hashem, what would it be?

What would be the *single* request that you would make of your Creator to improve your quality of life and perhaps that of those around you as well?

In *Tehillim 27*, the chapter which we recite daily during Elul up until Hoshana Raba, King David shares his one request:

אַחַת שְׁאַלְתִּי מֵאֵת דְּי אֹתָהּ אֶבְקֶשׁ שְׁבִתִּי בְּבֵית דְּי
*One thing I ask of the LORD, only that do I seek: to live in the house of the LORD.**

Trust.

Bitachon in Hashem.

This is truly the source of all blessing.

As the *Malbim* on *Tehillim 27:1* states:

ולכן מכל המון הבקשות אשר יבקש האדם ראוי שישים פניו אל שאלה אחת בה ימצא כל מבוקשיו, והוא שידבק בה תמיד עפ"י מתפלל שיעזרהו ה' על הדביקות הזה ויסיר מעליו כל המונעים אשר ישביתוהו מן הענין הגדול הזה אשר הוא תכלית אשרו ובקשתו

Therefore from the multitude of requests which a man can make, it is fitting that he focus on the single request in which he will find all that he desires; that is [to request] that he cleaves to Hashem constantly. Therefore [David] prays that Hashem assists him in achieving this deveikut and removes all obstacles that prevent this great thing which is the pinnacle of his happiness and his request.

What is it that *bitachon* affords us that is so valuable?

Why is that the single request that King David made to Hashem?

King David elaborates in saying:

דְּי אֹרֵי וְיִשְׁעֵי מִמִּי אֵיךָ דְּי מְעוֹזֵי מִמִּי אֶפְחָד

The LORD is my light and my help; whom should I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life, whom should I dread?

Perhaps a story will best illustrate this point:

I remember peering over the edge of the tall tower.

'Jump' whispered a faint voice which was quickly interrupted by blaring sirens and flashing lights escorting a frantic voice:

'Nooo!

You y..youu mustn't jump!

It's too high!

Are we stuck up here?

Oh my!'

I tried to silence my thoughts but to no avail.
The frenzied persona within me had taken control.
I felt frozen as I stood alone atop the skyscraper.

Finally, I called down below for help whereupon I heard the comforting voice of my husband:
'You can do it. Have Bitachon.'

His words silenced the fearful voice within me as I jumped off the building that day and landed smoothly on the soft padding, cradled by my harness the entire way down.

Full disclosure, the skyscraper which had seemed so overwhelming was in reality only a foam tower which stood a mere ten or fifteen feet tall. However, this only comes to elucidate the reality of the human condition whereupon in times of panic, the frantic voice within us, however illogical, often reigns supreme.

In these moments, or perhaps more importantly in the times when we are not entangled in such threatening situations, it is up to us to remind ourselves that in the places of our lives that appear most dark and scary, Hashem will illuminate the shadows and redeem us from the fearful.

One who lives with *bitachon* will shed all anxieties and fleeting worries.

One who is able to live a life in which he or she is constantly aware of Hashem's involvement and interest in them will be able to enjoy focus and serenity, regardless of external struggles and circumstances.

All else will melt away before G-d's warmth.

I know that this is an idea that we are all familiar with and yet it is one that so frequently escapes our consciousness, chased away by angst and fear. As the *Ramchal* states in his introduction to *Mesillat Yesharim*, to the corresponding degree that a concept is self-evident will it be overlooked and forgotten. So let's take a moment to remind ourselves daily of this invaluable message.

As we approach *Rosh Hashanah*, often referred to with the daunting title of *Yom HaDin*, let us remember that Hashem is not seeking to expose our faults and declare us guilty. Rather, this is an opportune period during which we are afforded the privilege of drawing close to our beloved. Of all the things we work hard for, this is worth our investment. Let us view this period of *Elul* as a time during which we can fearlessly admit to the image of who we want to be and engage in incremental steps to draw us closer to our ideal self. Lean in to Hashem and ask that He remove the obstacles that separate him from your ideal self and from G-d Himself.

*All Hebrew texts and translations are derived from Sefaria.org



Hilchos Shabbos

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Redacted by Dr. Emile Amzallag

How many Shabbos candles should one light?

Although, strictly speaking, only one candle is sufficient to light for Shabbat, the *Shulchan Aruch* (O.H. 263:1) says that there is a practice to light two candles, one alluding to *Zachor* (remembering Shabbat) and one alluding to *Shamor* (keeping Shabbat). The *Magen Avraham* (*ibid*:2) writes of customs to light seven candles, which allude to the days of the week, and even ten candles, to symbolize the Ten Commandments. The *Kaf Hachaim* (*ibid*:10) also mentions the custom of lighting seven candles, but bases it on the teachings of Kabbalah. *Rabbi Yitzhak Palagi* (*Yafe Lalev*, vol. II, § 3) says that Shlomo Hamelech's Menorah had ten branches, and since the root of his name is "peace", it is appropriate to light ten Shabbat candles.

The common Moroccan custom is to light two Shabbat candles. *Rabbi Mas'ud Abuhatzira*, in his *Piyut "Mizmor Shir Leyom Hashabbat,"* mentions "*Hova Shete Nerot Tadirim*" (lit. "the obligation is to have two constant candles"). According to Gematria, "*Ner*" has the value of 250 and when doubled equals 500, which is the sum of both the amount of limbs in a male (248) and the amount of limbs in a woman (252).

The *Rama* (*ibid.*) writes that if a woman forgets to light the Shabbat candles, she must light three Shabbat candles for the rest of her life as a penalty. *Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul* (*Or Lezion*, ch. 18, § 12) and *Rabbi Ovadia Yosef* (*Hazon Ovadia*, vol. I, pg. 174) write that nowadays that there is electricity, this is no longer the case. One of the reasons that the Mitzvah of Shabbat candles was instituted was to provide light such that people would not bump into each other in the dark and quarrel. Therefore, even if a woman forgets to light, there are other lights in the home that are on, which provide their own light. Furthermore, *Rabbi Ovadia* is lenient in imposing the penalty in cases where a woman wanted to light but was caught up in Shabbat preparations and missed the time, or in the case in which a woman eats in someone else's home. Nowadays, the penalty would only be applicable if a woman purposely ignored the Mitzvah of Shabbat candles.

There is a custom brought in the *Likutei Sichot* (Vol. 11 pg. 289) to light an additional candle upon the birth of each child.

Summary: The general custom is to light two Shabbat candles. In most cases nowadays, a woman need not light an extra Shabbat candle as a penalty if she failed to light the candles previously.



Maase Shehaya - Hashgacha

Pratis Stories

Hashem Helps!

This week's *Hashgacha Pratis* story is actually a personal story and occurrence which happened to me just a few days ago. Before knowing what I wished to write about and share in this week's newsletter, I began preparing my Dvar Torah by opening up a Chumash. *Baruch Hashem*, I happened to not only open the Chumash directly to this week's Parasha *Ki Teitzei* but also, the first words my eyes spotted were, "כי אהבך ד' א-להיך" ("*Hashem loves the Jewish People*"), which is the underlying theme and message of every *Dvar Torah* on HashemlovesU.com! I felt a tremendous chizzuk, support, and help from Hashem!



Stories of Tzadikim

A Broken Heart

The *Ba'al Shem Tov* asked Rabbi Zev Kitzes to be the *Ba'al Tokeah* (one who blows shofar) for the Rosh Hashanah service and to have all the *kabbalastic* intentions behind each shofar blast. R' Kitzes seriously studied all the secret meanings and meditations of shofar and made sure to write down all of his notes on a piece of paper to be stored in his pocket so that he could review them before blowing the shofar.

On the day of Rosh Hashana, he checked his pockets and was horrified to find that the notes had gone missing. He was forced to blow the shofar without remembering any of the *kavanos* he had prepared, and in that moment of difficulty, shame, and brokenheartedness, the *Baal Shem Tov* called out, "*tekiah!*" and R' Kitzes blew the horn simply as required by the letter of the law.

Afterwards, the *Baal Shem Tov* approached him and happily thanked R' Kitzes for blowing the shofar. R' Kitzes began to tearfully apologize for failing to properly carry out the role his Rebbe entrusted him with, but the *Baal Shem Tov* interrupted him and said, "No, you don't understand, you really succeeded! The different *kavanos* were meant to be the keys to opening the many gates of prayer and you were supposed to use them. But, better than any of those keys is the one "master" key that opens every door and unlocks the innermost chambers of the Divine palace—a broken heart. Like an ax, you played the shofar with your broken heart and opened all the doors and all of our prayers ascended and entered!



Zemiros | Achas by. Mordechai Shapiro

Before Shabbos, scan the QR-Code below to listen and prepare this week's song for the Shabbos table!



Jokes: Mitzvah Gedolah Lihiyot B'Simcha! | From *You're Joking! The Kosher Joke Book* by Tzvia (Happy) Ehrlich-Klein

1. Fruit

Q) What is the best fruit to eat while the Shabbos candles are lit?

A) *Candleoupe*

2. Minyan

Q) What did the Rabbi say when the 10th man came into shul early in the morning?

A) *"I'm so happy to see you! Thanks a minyan!"*

Wishing everyone a safe, healthy, beautiful, happy, uplifting, and restful Shabbos Kodesh!

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