

BITACHON LESSON FROM THE PARSHA

פרשת פי תבוא אל הארץ תשפ"ו – Hashem's Fruits

וְלִקַּחְתָּ מִרְאשֵׁית כָּל פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר תִּבְנֶה מֵאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ
 You shall take of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you will
 bring from your land, which Hashem, is giving you (Devarim 26:2)

The Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah 1:1) teaches:

רַב מִתְנָה אָמַר בְּזֻכּוֹת שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם בְּזֻכּוֹת חֵלֶה וּבְזֻכּוֹת מַעֲשָׂוִת
 וּבְזֻכּוֹת בְּכוֹרִים, וּמֵה טַעַם בְּרָאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהֵי-יָם... וְאִין רֵאשִׁית אֱלֹהֵי בְּכוֹרִים
 שְׁנֵאמַר רֵאשִׁית בְּכוֹרֵי אֲדָמָה וְגו'
 The world was created for the sake of...Bikurim

While Bikurim is certainly a great Mitzvah, what is so distinctive about it that it stands out above all other Mitzvos as "the" Mitzvah for which the world was created?

To believe that Hashem created the world doesn't require much intelligence. Anyone with half a brain recognizes **אם יש בירה יש בעל הבירה** (See Bereishis Rabba 39:1); it's just a logical conclusion.

However, the very same logic that demands that we admit there's a Creator is what makes it so difficult to believe that the things that are seemingly created by man are in fact not created by man at all; they too are a result of heavenly contribution.

When two countries are at war, both have strategy sessions, battalions, ammunition, tactical teams, intelligence personnel, morale boosters and an entire infrastructure of **כחי ועוצם ידי**. Yet, we must believe and know that it's all a mirage, as it's **ה' איש מלחמה** – it's all Hashem; it's only Hashem Who fights and wins wars. The two warring sides are all chess pieces; Hashem is the Chess Master.

This is a concept that people struggle to wrap their minds around, but it's the absolute truth. Like we saw in last week's Parsha, **בִּי תִצָּא לַמִּלְחָמָה עַל אֹיְבֶיךָ**, when you go to war against an adversary, the only way to win that war is **וַיִּתֵּן ה' אֶלֶּה-יָדְךָ בְּיָדְךָ** – by Hashem deciding that you will be the victor. This is Bitachon 101.

It's the same way with our food supply. A farmer plows his field, plants seeds, irrigates them, prunes the trees and harvests his crops – all by the sweat of his brow. When he reaches for the first fruits of his labor, it is a perfect time to pat himself on the back and celebrate his **כחי ועוצם ידי**.

The Torah gently reminds him **אֲשֶׁר ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ-יָדְךָ נָתַן לָךְ**. You didn't produce these fruits; Hashem did. Hashem did it all. Your sweat and tears was all a mirage, Mr. Farmer. You are just a puppet; Hashem is the puppet Master.

Hashem alone makes everything on earth, even when it seems like we had something to do with it.
אֲתָה הוּא ה' לְבַדְּךָ אֲתָה עֹשִׂיתָ...הָאָרֶץ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ...וְאֲתָה מַחֲיָה אֶת כָּלֶם

Hashem alone satiates all mankind, even when it seems like our toil is what produced our food.
הֲזֵן אֶת הָעוֹלָם כֻּלּוֹ בְּטוֹבוֹ בָּחַן וּבִחְסֵד וּבְרַחֲמִים... הוּא נוֹתֵן לָהֶם לֶחֶם לְכָל בָּשָׂר

It's easy to coronate Hashem as King of the Universe.
 It's much more difficult to coronate Hashem as King over ourselves!

This is why the Gemara (Rosh Hashana 16a) teaches:
אָמְרוּ לְפָנֵי בְּרָאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה מַלְכוּת...כְּדִי שֶׁתִּמְלִיכוּנִי עָלֵיכֶם

Recite before Me on Rosh Hashana Pesukim that mention Kingship...so that you will crown Me as King over you.

The key word here is **עָלֵיכֶם** – on you! On all your efforts, on all your toil, on all your intellect, on all your **כחי ועוצם ידי**. None of it was you; it was all Hashem, our King!

That is the lesson of Bikurim. I put in 100% effort, yet I give 100% credit to Hashem, as my Hishtadlus doesn't produce any results. Results are 100% Hashem's department. (See Mesilas Yesharim Perek 21)

Recognizing this reality is the very purpose of being in this world – and it's the very purpose of the world's existence in the first place. **בְּרָאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהֵי-יָם** is not just recognizing Hashem's power in creating the universe, it's also recognizing Hashem's power in creating His fruit, by giving us the strength to toil in the fields and allowing us to harvest it for our sustenance.

Living with Bitachon is living with a firm belief that not only did Hashem create the world; He continues to create it – and everything in it – constantly, without any help from me or you.

By Bikurim, it's not our fruits that we bring; they were Hashem's fruits all along! This is Bitachon 101.

אָמְרוּ לְפָנֵי
 מַלְכוּת כְּדִי
 שֶׁתִּמְלִיכוּנִי
 עָלֵיכֶם

Good Shabbos!