

BITACHON LESSON FROM THE PARSHA

ברשת שפטים ושטרים תתן לך תשפ"ו – Bitachon Is Not Magic!

וְחָבֵר חֵבֶר וְשֹׂאֵל אוֹב וְיֹדְעֵי דָרָשׁ אֶל הַמֵּתִים...כִּי תוֹעֲבֹת ה' כָּל עֹשֶׂה אֱלֹהִים...תִּמְיָם תִּהְיֶה עִם ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ

A snake-diviner, a witch, or a sorcerer who communicates with the dead...for whoever does these things becomes an abomination to Hashem...Be wholehearted with Hashem, your G-d. (Devarim 18:11-13)

Rashi comments:

הַתִּהְיֶה עִם ה' בְּתִמְיָמוֹת וְהִצָּפָה לוֹ וְלֹא תִחְקֹר אַחֵר הַעֲתִידוֹת אֵלָּא כָּל מִה שִׁבֵּא עֲלֶיךָ קִבֵּל בְּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁמִּתְחַלֵּת הַבְּרִיָּאָה לְכָל דָּבָר וְדָבָר מִדִּבְרֵי הָעוֹלָם טֹבֵעַ לִפְעֵל פְּעֻלָּתוֹ טוֹבָה וְיִשְׁרָה לְטוֹבוֹת בְּנֵי הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא, וְצוּרָה כָּל אֶחָד לִפְעֵל פְּעֻלָּתוֹ לְמִינָהּ...וְגַם עַל כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד מִשְׁכִּיל כֹּחַ מִלְמַעְלָה לְהַכְרִיחוֹ עַל מַעֲשָׂהוּ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאִמְרוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לְבָרָכָה אֵין לָךְ עֶשֶׂב מִלְמַשָּׁה שְׂאִין לוֹ מִזֶּל מִלְמַעְלָה, שְׂאִימֹר לוֹ גָּדֹל. וְמִלְבָּד פְּעֻלָּתָם שְׁעוֹשֶׂה כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד בְּטֻבָּעוֹ יֵשׁ לָהֶם פְּעֻלָּה אַחֶרֶת. בְּהַתְעָרֵב מִיָּן מֵהֶם עִם מִיָּן אַחֵר, וּבְמִלְאֲכָתָהּ הַתְעָרֵב יֵשׁ בָּהּ צָדִידִין שֶׁלֹּא הָרָשׁוּ בְנֵי אָדָם לְהַשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בָּהֶן, כִּי יוֹדֵעַ אֱלֹהִים יֵשׁ שְׂסוּף מִלְמַעְלָה הֵיכָא לְבָנֵי אָדָם בְּאוֹתוֹן צָדִידִין רַע לָהֶן, וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה מִנְעָם מֵהֶם...וְעוֹד יֵשׁ בְּאוֹתוֹן צָדִידִי הַתְעָרְבוֹת וְהַתְחַבְּלוֹת הָאֲסוּרוֹת לַעֲשׂוֹת עֵינָן אַחֵר שֶׁאִסְרוּ בְּעִבְרוֹ לִפְנֵי שֶׁכָּח אוֹתוֹ הַתְעָרֵב עוֹלָה כָּל כָּד שֶׁמִּבְטֵל מִפְּעֻלָּתוֹ לִפְנֵי שֶׁעַד כֹּחַ הַמְּזַל הַמִּמְנֶה עַל שְׁנֵי הַמִּינִים. וְהַמְּשֵׁל עַל זֶה, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאֵתָּה רֹאֶה שֶׁהַמְּרִיב מִיָּן בְּשִׂינּוֹ מִיָּן וְחֻדְשׁוֹ לְבִירָא מִיָּן שְׁלִישִׁי, נִמָּצֵא שֶׁבְּטֻלָה הַהִרְכָּבָה כֹּחַ שְׁנֵיהֶם, וְעַל כֵּן נִמְנָעֵנוּ מִלְּהַעֲלוֹת עַל רוּחָנוֹ אִף כִּי נַעֲשֶׂה בִּינְדִינוֹ דָּבָר שֶׁמִּרְאָה בְּנוֹ רָצוֹן לְהַחֲלִיף דָּבָר בְּמַעֲשֵׂי הָאֵל הַשְּׁלֵמוֹת.

The Rashbam comments:

וּמִמֶּנּוּ תִדְרוֹשׁ וְלֹא מִן הַמֵּתִים וּלְפִי כִי מִנְסָה הַקְב"ה בָּם אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל נִתֵּן כֹּחַ בִּירוֹחַ - Only seek out the future from Hashem [via Nevuah or Urim V'Tumim; see Rashi Devarim 18:14], and not from the dead. So why did Hashem give power to these impure forces? To test Klal Yisroel!

When the Yetzer Hara utilizes **כוחות הטומאה** (impure forces) and makes it seem as if they have divine power it's a tremendous test for us, to reject that mirage, and only place our trust in Hashem, the sole true power in the universe, the One Who holds the key to the future.

The Sefer Hachinuch (Mitzvah 62) in discussing the directive to kill witches writes:

וְעַל כֵּן נִצְטְוֵנוּ לְסַלֵּק מִן הָעוֹלָם הַמְשִׁתְּדֵל בָּזֶה לִפְנֵי שֶׁהוּא בָּא בְּגִידֵי חֹפֶץ הַשֵּׁם שֶׁהוּא חֹפֶץ בִּישׁוּבוֹ וְשִׁתְּנָהוּ הַכֹּל בְּדֶרֶךְ הַטֵּבָע שֶׁהֻבַּע בְּתַחֲלֹת הַבְּרִיָּאָה, וְזֶה בָּא לְשׁוֹנוֹת הַכֹּל. וְעֵינָן הַכְּשׁוּף הוּא לִפְנֵי דַעֲתֵי כֹן, שֶׁהַשֵּׁם בְּרוּךְ הוּא שֶׁמִּתְחַלֵּת הַבְּרִיָּאָה לְכָל דָּבָר וְדָבָר מִדִּבְרֵי הָעוֹלָם טֹבֵעַ לִפְעֵל פְּעֻלָּתוֹ טוֹבָה וְיִשְׁרָה לְטוֹבוֹת בְּנֵי הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא, וְצוּרָה כָּל אֶחָד לִפְעֵל פְּעֻלָּתוֹ לְמִינָהּ...וְגַם עַל כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד מִשְׁכִּיל כֹּחַ מִלְמַעְלָה לְהַכְרִיחוֹ עַל מַעֲשָׂהוּ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאִמְרוּ זִכְרוֹנָם לְבָרָכָה אֵין לָךְ עֶשֶׂב מִלְמַשָּׁה שְׂאִין לוֹ מִזֶּל מִלְמַעְלָה, שְׂאִימֹר לוֹ גָּדֹל. וְמִלְבָּד פְּעֻלָּתָם שְׁעוֹשֶׂה כָּל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד בְּטֻבָּעוֹ יֵשׁ לָהֶם פְּעֻלָּה אַחֶרֶת. בְּהַתְעָרֵב מִיָּן מֵהֶם עִם מִיָּן אַחֵר, וּבְמִלְאֲכָתָהּ הַתְעָרֵב יֵשׁ בָּהּ צָדִידִין שֶׁלֹּא הָרָשׁוּ בְנֵי אָדָם לְהַשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בָּהֶן, כִּי יוֹדֵעַ אֱלֹהִים יֵשׁ שְׂסוּף מִלְמַעְלָה הֵיכָא לְבָנֵי אָדָם בְּאוֹתוֹן צָדִידִין רַע לָהֶן, וּמִפְּנֵי זֶה מִנְעָם מֵהֶם...וְעוֹד יֵשׁ בְּאוֹתוֹן צָדִידִי הַתְעָרְבוֹת וְהַתְחַבְּלוֹת הָאֲסוּרוֹת לַעֲשׂוֹת עֵינָן אַחֵר שֶׁאִסְרוּ בְּעִבְרוֹ לִפְנֵי שֶׁכָּח אוֹתוֹ הַתְעָרֵב עוֹלָה כָּל כָּד שֶׁמִּבְטֵל מִפְּעֻלָּתוֹ לִפְנֵי שֶׁעַד כֹּחַ הַמְּזַל הַמִּמְנֶה עַל שְׁנֵי הַמִּינִים. וְהַמְּשֵׁל עַל זֶה, כְּמוֹ שֶׁאֵתָּה רֹאֶה שֶׁהַמְּרִיב מִיָּן בְּשִׂינּוֹ מִיָּן וְחֻדְשׁוֹ לְבִירָא מִיָּן שְׁלִישִׁי, נִמָּצֵא שֶׁבְּטֻלָה הַהִרְכָּבָה כֹּחַ שְׁנֵיהֶם, וְעַל כֵּן נִמְנָעֵנוּ מִלְּהַעֲלוֹת עַל רוּחָנוֹ אִף כִּי נַעֲשֶׂה בִּינְדִינוֹ דָּבָר שֶׁמִּרְאָה בְּנוֹ רָצוֹן לְהַחֲלִיף דָּבָר בְּמַעֲשֵׂי הָאֵל הַשְּׁלֵמוֹת.

We are commanded to put to death someone who practices witchcraft, as Hashem desires the world's settlement and that everything should run in a natural way, as He created it, and this person wants to change it. At the beginning of creation, Hashem gave each thing in the world a nature through which to accomplish its task for the good of the world; He commanded each one to act according to its nature. He made a higher force to govern each one from above, to compel it to perform its nature; as Chazal teach "There is no blade of grass below that does not have a Mazel above that tells it, 'Grow!'" Besides the nature of each species, there's another action that they are capable of, by mixing two species together. In this mixing there are some that were not permitted for people to utilize, because Hashem knows that the end result will be bad for them. There is another matter in these forbidden actions of mixture and machinations for which they were forbidden. It is because the power of this mixture is so strong that it negates the power of the Mazalos that are assigned to the original two species. Like with grafting of two species, a new third species is created. That grafting negates the power of both of them. So we have been directed to not switch the perfect acts of Hashem

What drives people to be drawn to black magic and fortune telling? Why would people want to upset the natural order of the world they live in?

Our Neshama is a **חלק אלוה-ממעל**; we are a piece of Hashem. We have an intense, innate desire to be close to Hashem, and to be like Hashem. As such, humans have a desire to know everything – as Hashem does, and to control everything – as Hashem does. This desire can be channeled properly, to

further our *Avodas Hashem* and get closer to Hashem, or improperly, to follow the Yetzer Hara's wicked schemes.

When one lives with Emunah and Bitachon, and trusts that whatever Hashem does is good, right, beneficial and exactly as it is supposed to be, he doesn't have the desire to know more than Hashem wants him to know, and he doesn't have the desire to control things in a way that would alter Hashem's plans. One who has Bitachon is OK with the way "Nature" rolls, as he knows that in reality there is no such thing as "Nature"; it's Hashem Who is pulling all the strings. Such a person lives with **תמים תהיה עם ה' אלהיך**

When one lacks Emunah and Bitachon, however, and doesn't trust that Hashem knows what He is doing, he becomes anxious, nervous, concerned, fearful and upset when "Nature" doesn't go his way. Such a person has a desire to poke in places he doesn't belong, and tries to know how things will develop in the future, and a desire to alter Hashem's plans and control his own destiny. Such a person lives with **דרש אל המתים**

ולא תחקר
אחר
העתידות

Does this mean that one who lives with Bitachon can never think about his future? No, it doesn't mean that at all. What it does mean is that the only path to the future is the same path as our past and as the present: the path of Hashem via Emunah, Bitachon, Torah, Mitzvos and Tefilah. We have to be extremely careful about how we approach our future, as there is often a very fine line between acceptable methods that fall under

the purview of **תמים תהיה עם ה' אלהיך** and unacceptable methods of the Yetzer Hara that masquerade as "Kosher" Segulos and the like, which are in reality under the purview of **וְחָבֵר חֵבֶר וְשֹׂאֵל אוֹב וְיֹדְעֵי דָרָשׁ אֶל הַמֵּתִים**.

Not everything that has Hebrew letters on it is kosher. Not everyone who dresses as a Kabbalist is legitimate. Not everything that tugs at our vulnerabilities is aboveboard. Before following the throngs and throwing money – and your Neshama – at the latest "Segulah of the day", make sure you are not jeopardizing your **תמים תהיה עם ה' אלהיך**. Before falling into the trap of the *Sitra Achra*, consult with an authentic Torah scholar to determine if it's a tried and true acceptable path to Hashem, or if perhaps it's a path laid by the Yetzer Hara to lure you to be **דרש אל המתים**.

When in doubt, remember: **אין סגולה כתורה**, there is no better Segulah – *for health, Parnassah, Shiduchim, long life, children, Shalom Bayis, and anything else that you may need* – than learning and keeping the commandments of the Torah, and it is even free of charge!

Good Shabbos!