

Full English translation and transcript of Rav Ofer Erev, shlita, speaking in Holon during the three weeks, 5776, about the true cause of the destruction of the Second Temple, and how to practically fix the sin of sinat chinam (baseless hatred) and bring the geula.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A 'GOOD EYE'

Bezrat Hashem, we're going to start learning today a Torah in Likutey Moharan, Torah 282, the Lesson is called 'Azamra' - I will sing to my God.

And about this Torah, Rabbenu said it's practically impossible to pass through all the tests and clarifications that we'll have to go through before the geula without this Torah.

More than all the other Torah and advice that Rabbenu gave over, he emphasized the importance of 'walking everywhere' with this Torah. What does he mean 'walk everywhere' with this Torah?

It's not a hard lesson to learn, but it's the hardest lesson to actually implement, in terms of how to practically apply it. Putting it into practice, it's a Lesson that's called 'Shmirat eynayim' - guard your eyes.

What does it mean to 'guard the eyes'?

Guarding the eyes has two aspects: The first one is very simple: be careful what you look at! But there's another aspect that's talked about in this lesson which is to 'guard your eyes' from having a 'bad' eye - an 'evil' eye.

And to try to understand how we can have a 'good eye'. Because via this whole lesson, Rabbenu is teaching us the secret of how to develop a 'good eye' (ayin tova). So what's a 'good' eye?

At the start of the lesson, Rabbenu tells us immediately what a good eye is.

"Know! That you need to judge every person favorably, And even the most wicked person in the world, you need to search out in him some good point that by way of this, he is not wicked.

By finding in him this bit of good and judging him favorably, you tip him into the scale of merit and righteousness, so that he is able to do teshuva.

HOW TO BRING OTHER PEOPLE BACK IN TESHUVA

And at the moment that we look at each other from the side of judging favorably, by doing this we bring each other back to doing teshuva. And even someone who possesses almost nothing, nothing good, despite this, still search out in him and see what good point he still possesses.

Yes, he's stealing from people, he's a gangster, he's got the biggest drug-dealing outfit in the neighborhood - but see how he's still helping out families for Shabbat. There was a Jew like this who had the biggest drug-dealing network in the neighborhood but who used to help poor families for Shabbat, and send them food baskets for Shabbat. So what Rabbenu is saying here he's telling us a big secret.

If he steals, etc, we don't judge those things favorably. We don't say 'it's not such a big deal to steal things'. Rabbenu doesn't agree with that. Stealing is negative behavior.

Rather, Rabbenu is telling is something else. Rabbenu tells us to search and to look really carefully if there aren't some other things that he's doing where you CAN see his good side.

The good things that he's doing. And it's very important to look at the good that he possesses inside of him. And another thing that Rabbenu is telling us, but we really have to understand it:

He says: By way of seeing this good point in him, this good deed we really take him from the side of 'guilt' to the side of 'merit', and because we're doing this, he'll come to make complete teshuva.

We need to understand a little Rabbenu's words, to see what he's really telling us. But before we do, let's do a short introduction to something that is at the foundation of this Torah lesson.

CHAZAL DISCUSSES WHY THE TEMPLES WERE DESTROYED

Chazal asks the question: Why was the First Temple destroyed and why was the Second Temple destroyed? And they come to the following conclusion: The first Temple was destroyed because of the three cardinal sins, namely immoral behavior, bloodshed and idol-worship. Really terrible sins!

Immorality, idol-worship, murder, of course these are awful sins! And that's why the first Temple was destroyed. Why was the Second temple destroyed? Because of Sinat chinam (baseless hatred).

That's what Chazal says, after plumbing the matter to its depths, and they come to this conclusion, about the reasons why the two temples were destroyed. In a different place, Chazal say something that's a little difficult. What do they say?

The first temple, where the reason is revealed. What does this mean, the 'reason is revealed'? That we know why, what sins caused its destruction, the destruction of the first Temple, so, 'it's end' is also revealed. What does this mean?

There was a prophesy from the Prophet Isaiah many years before the First Temple was destroyed that the first Temple will be destroyed in the future. But that all the destruction will only last for 70 years.

This was a well-known prophecy, everyone knew it. Also the non-Jews, also Am Yisrael, everyone knew that the time between the first temple and the second would only be 70 years. This is what Chazal meant that the reason is revealed and the end is revealed.

They knew the whole exile would only be 70 years.

WHY IS CHAZAL CONTRADICTING THEMSELVES?

The second temple: the reason is NOT revealed, so also the end is not revealed. This year, we're already 1948 years after the destruction of the second Temple, but we still don't know when the third Temple is going to be rebuilt. This is what Chazal is talking about. Because we don't know the reason why the second Temple was destroyed, so we also don't know when the third Temple will be rebuilt. So says Chazal.

But this is very difficult! Why? Because a moment ago, we said in Chazal's name that the reason the second temple was destroyed was sinat chinam.

So, we DO know the reason why it was destroyed. How can Chazal tell us, somewhere else, the same Chazal, who told us the second Temple was destroyed because of sinat chinam, and now in a different place are saying 'the reason isn't revealed' - we don't know the reason.

Here we have a kushia, a difficulty, with Chazal. They're contradicting themselves. But of course, there isn't really a problem here. Rather, we need to explain what's going on.

It's true, that Chazal told us that because of sinat chinam the second Temple was destroyed. When they say 'the reason isn't revealed', what they mean is two different things. We ourselves, we don't understand the depth of the destruction that there is with sinat chinam.

OUR MIND CAN'T GRASP THE GRAVITY OF THE SIN OF SINAT CHINAM

To where the destruction reaches, with sinat chinam. It's not obvious to us. Our minds can't grasp the awfulness, the gravity of the sin of sinat chinam, which is worse than immorality, murder and idol-worship.

That's what Chazal means, that we don't know the reason. It hasn't been revealed to US how big the sin really is. That's the first explanation. The second explanation of 'we don't know the reason', is that it's not revealed to us just how much God Himself is strict about the sin of sinat chinam.

Hashem tell us many times, He tells us: Even if you do a lot of sins, if you love each other I won't do anything to you.

WHY KING AHAV WAS SUCCESSFUL, DESPITE BEING AN IDOL-WORSHIPPER

That's why it's written that at the time of King Shaul: Am Yisrael were tzaddikim, but they had wars, and they lost their wars. But in the time of Ahav, they worshipped every idol under the sun.

Ahav had a wife called Izevel (Jezebel) and she introduced Am Yisrael to idol worship - they all worshipped idols because of her, because of Izevel, and Ahav joined in with her and encouraged her.

But Chazal say, he almost never had a war, and if he had a war, he always used to win. How can this be? Chazal ask this question! How can it be?

Chazal say: Why was this? Because they didn't speak lashon hara. Ahav used to say: "I'll let you do any sin you want. But if someone speaks lashon hara they'll be beaten." Ahav was very strict about this.

Chazal says: That Ahav's army never lost a battle. All the days of his life, he wasn't beaten, and all this happened why? Because he was strict about not speaking lashon hara about other people.

This is another hint about just how strict God is on the sins between a man and his fellow. How strict God is about this. We don't grasp it. We don't get it, how strict Heaven is about this

subject, how strict God is about this matter. And this is what Chazal said: 'the reason is not revealed'. We don't know...

WHAT IS SINAT CHINAM?

They mean that it's not revealed to US the seriousness of the problem of sinat chinam. What is sinat chinam?

Chazal say: sinat chinam doesn't mean now Reuven is going to do something horrible to Shimon because he hates him. Of course, that's also sinat chinam. But there's many more stages there's subtleties here, there's a more 'internal' dimension to the matter. Chazal tell us a terrible thing:

Every single feeling of envy, hatred, harsh judgment, anger, that a Jew feels about someone else, this is also considered to be part of the problem of 'sinat chinam'. And because of this we haven't managed to rebuild the third Temple.

Everyone asks, everyone want to know: 'when are we going to get the geula?' Hashem is pushing us to cry out to Him from the depths of our hearts to bring the geula. We see it's being delayed.

WHY IS GEULA BEING DELAYED?

The question is asked: "Why's the geula being delayed?" What's the reason for delaying the geula?!

All the reason why the geula is being delayed, we should know, is solely and only because of these internal bad middot. We're not talking about hitting people here, or because we're arguing with them. If a person just feels something in their heart he's not even saying a word about it - he's a tzaddik, he's not talking about it to anyone else externally - but, if he still feels in his heart envy, hatred, or harsh judgments, anger against another person - anything that's connected to these things, Chazal tell us: **this is the central reason why the geula is being delayed.**

This subject is so very deep, the matter of how a Jew relates to his fellow Jew. So, when we reflect on this and especially now - all the year round - but especially in the three weeks. Today, in another week and a half, it'll be Tisha B'av.

BH, this year we won't be fasting. We certainly won't be fasting on Tisha B'Av, and also not on the 10th of Av, either! We'll already be eating lamb chops, and goat chops in the temple, bezrat Hashem.

WE NEED TO RECTIFY BASELESS HATRED

But when we reflect on this in the three weeks to see what we need to be doing, what we're meant to be doing in order to bring the geula nearer, and to ensure both that the geula comes faster, and also comes with mercy and kindness, we need to know, that the single biggest secret about this is to rectify this issue of sinat chinam.

To rectify baseless hatred.

How do we fix sinat chinam? Ahavat chinam (baseless love). Today it's very difficult...Someone told me yesterday that today no-one is willing to give anything 'for free' (chinam). They're not even willing to give them 'sina' (hatred) for free.

And certainly not to give love for free! But this point, this aspect of how Rabbenu is teaching us how to apply the Torah's ideals practically, in Lesson 282, Rabbenu is teaching us the way how we can fix the issue of sinat chinam. It's a lesson of rectification how we can rectify the thing that destroyed the second Temple, the rectification of sinat chinam.

LEAVE THE 'BAD' AND DO 'GOOD'

First things first, in every spiritual matter, we always find the principle of 'leave the bad, and do good'. What is the 'leave the bad' aspect of sinat chinam? It's that we should merit to work (we'll see how in minute...) to work on our internal character traits, especially machloket (making trouble), envy, anger and judging others harshly. To work on these points.

For sure, nobody can in the space of a week, completely fix themselves. Not in a week, and not in a month, and not even in a year. We should be fortunate to fix it within 20 years!

Hashem won't judge us harshly that we still have these bad middot inside of us.

What does God want from us? Just that we make an effort. The moment that a person makes some effort, Heaven already considers it that he's a tzaddik in this area. Because God knows no-one can fix their bad middot so quickly, not in a year and even not in two years, can we fix these middot.

It's the work of a lifetime. We need to work on it all our lives. But, **at the moment that a person even just begins this process, in Heaven they no longer have any complaints against him.**

Hashem doesn't expect of us that we should be angels within 24 hours. If He wanted that, He would've created the world a little differently, so we could become angels within 24 hours. Instead, God gave us 80 years, up to 120 years to work on these issues, in order that we can truly rectify ourselves in these areas.

HOW CAN WE FIX OUR BAD MIDDOT?

The first thing is, how can we really fix our harsh judgments, our anger, all the jealousy that we have inside? What we said earlier, that this sin is not really 'revealed' to us, means that we can't really admit to ourselves how deeply rooted inside of us this sin actually is. Often, we don't even know what's going on ourselves!

We don't know that we're angry at others, judging them harshly. And even more so, a person doesn't know how much he's jealous of someone else. The character trait of jealousy is the sort of midda that a person often isn't even aware that he has. So many times we feel jealous inside, but we're not aware of it.

So what do we need to do? What's the work we need to do to overcome it?

The main work to do to overcome this is via tefilah, by talking to God, by doing hitbodedut, some personal accounting. It doesn't matter what, exactly, but we need to ask God to help us to

identify these character traits that we have inside of us, to show us the truth, to open our eyes for us, so that we can see the truth.

And at the moment that a person acknowledges the truth and asks for help - my experience of this, and also many others have told me - that **at the moment we ask for this, they'll show us.**

“Look, how much anger you have inside, how much jealousy, how many judgment calls!”

ACKNOWLEDGING OUR FLAWS IS A HUGE THING

When a person actually acknowledges these things, it's a huge thing! A person should be happy that he's identified these things internally, and shouldn't be unhappy. That we suddenly realise that we have a lot of jealousy, or a lot of anger, or that we're very judgmental of others, he shouldn't feel bad about this!

The opposite, be happy about it! Why be happy? Because now, they are helping you. They are showing you where you're really holding, spiritually. After they show a person where he is holding, he should take it and give it to Hashem, he should raise it up with words to Hashem

What does it mean to raise it up with words to Hashem? For example, if you notice that you have jealousy inside you don't fall into depression, Hashem doesn't need our depression, our depression doesn't help anything.

Instead, we need to tell Hashem, have mercy on me! Help me! Take this character trait of jealousy away from me!

If you suddenly feel hatred towards someone else, or anger, like you really want to judge them very harshly, like you want to help him achieve his 'tikkun haklali' (general rectification)... Sometimes we want to help someone else to reach their 'tikkun haklali' to help them pass on from the world...

When we recognise these things within ourselves, when we recognise these characteristics within ourselves, what do we need to do? We need to take these feelings that are inside of us and to turn them into a conversation with God.

WE'RE NOT TO BLAME!

Don't fall into sadness, and start asking: 'why am I jealous?' etc Why are we jealous? Because God placed those characteristics inside of us!

That's our mission here in this world, to fix these things. We're not to blame that we have these negative things! So what we need to do is to acknowledge the truth: yes, I have a jealousy problem, I hate other people - to take these middot and then immediately turn them into a conversation with Hashem.

When are our prayers accepted by Hashem?

That happens when a person recognises these things inside himself and then immediately asks God to help him with them, at the very moment that he sees these things and asks for help his prayers are immediately accepted by God.

So, then what happens is that God opens up our eyes, and helps us to really see where we're really holding. We need to know, this is actually a very big gift! Because the yetzer hara comes when Hashem starts showing us just what a big problem we actually have with jealousy, anger, how much we're really judging people negatively, so then the yetzer hara comes and tells him 'now you have to be sad!'

Why?

'Because you are the worst person in the world!' But Rabbeni says 'no!' Hashem doesn't judge us harshly that we're full of jealousy or full of anger, and all the rest.

HASHEM ONLY JUDGES A PERSON HARSHLY WHEN THEY PRETEND TO BE PERFECT

Hashem only judges us harshly - when does he judge a person harshly?

Rav Dessler wrote in his book 'Michtav Me'Eliyahu' (a letter from Eliyahu): **When is Hashem strict with a person? When he says: 'I'm the most OK person in the world...'**

Why am I Holon right now? (where the shiur is being given) Only because I need to pray for Holon, and to give Holon some help! There's a lot of problems in Holon, so God put me in this generation just to help other people do teshuva. In my merit, Holon is being raised up.

This is what wakes up Hashem's attribute of harsh judgment against a person.

This is a very deep point: You saw the truth? Immediately talk to God about it. As soon as a person does this, he starts walking on the path of rectification, as soon as a person notices what's going on, and asks for mercy.

What are we asking for mercy about? Help me! Take this jealousy away from me! Take the anger, the harsh judgment!

THE FIRST SECRET OF HOW TO RECTIFY SINAT CHINAM

This is the first secret of how to rectify sinat chinam.

First things first, acknowledge the truth, acknowledge the truth and then talk to God about it.

Many years' ago, a long time ago I was talking to one of the tzaddikim, and I said to him that, I'm not so thrilled about where I'm actually holding (it was the Admor of Porisov).

I told him, Hashem showed me that I'm not actually the biggest tzaddik in the world. I thought I was...but suddenly I'm seeing I'm not exactly 'there'. I remember that the Admor laughed, and he told me: now you're starting to begin to really serve Hashem!

I asked him: 'what do you mean?' He replied: "The more a person sees the truth about himself, it's a sign that he's starting to come closer to God." It's exactly the opposite (of what we think). If you're now seeing the truth, it's a sign that God is drawing you nearer.

So this is the first secret of how to fix sinat chinam. This is from the aspect 'leave the bad' - to fix the evil that's inside of us.

FIXING THE PROBLEM FROM THE SIDE OF 'DO GOOD'

Here, Rabbenu starts his lesson with the 'do good' aspect. Rabbenu tells us how we can fix this from the side of 'do good'. As we said earlier for each thing there's the 'leave the bad' and the 'do good' side.

How can we fix the issue of *sinat chinam* from the path of 'do good'? Rabbenu tells us this secret when he says that we need to 'judge everyone to the side of merit', and even someone who's a complete evil-doer, we still need to search out in him some point where he's still good, in that particular area.

Rav Natan said a very big secret about this matter: every good thing that you find within a person, it's Divine light. After all, we say in the morning: 'Elokai, the soul that you gave to me is pure'. It's our Divine aspect, it's the Godly soul that we possess inside of us.

All the good that we have inside of us this is the expression of, the revelation of the Godly soul we have inside of us. So, when we recognise something good in someone else, what are we really recognising inside of them? What aspect? The Godly soul that they have inside of them.

That's the good that a person possess inside himself, his Godly soul!

So firstly, Rabbenu tells us a big secret. This is the work of a lifetime. We need to continue doing this throughout our whole life, to see how we can switch our anger at people to judging them favorably.

This is what's written, what do we say before the Ma'ariv (evening) prayers? If there's *broguez* (upset with people) remember mercy. What does 'if there's *broguez* remember mercy' mean? What are we really saying?

INSTEAD OF GETTING ANGRY, HAVE MERCY ON HIM!

Rav Natan gives an amazing explanation of this: Right now, you're angry at someone. Why are you angry? He did something to bother you. You saw that he did something stupid, or made a mistake.

Rabbenu tells us: instead of getting angry at him that he did such a stupid thing have mercy on him, because he did such a stupid thing. That's what it means 'instead of *broguez*', remember the trait of mercy.'

For the very same reason that you're angry at the person for that selfsame reason - have mercy on him! I told someone a little while ago, who was having *shalom bayit* issues, I told him that if we could merit that inside our homes, if we could switch out *broguez* for 'remember mercy' then in every home there would be the most amazing *shalom bayit* (marital peace) ever.

How do we know? Because this is how the world usually works. It's been like this for 5776 years already, that the husband starts judging the wife harshly and the wife starts judging the husband harshly, too.

You know how this started? We know how this began...It started three hours after Adam HaRishon was created. He was created, Chava (Eve) was created - and immediately all the trouble started.

She gave him the apple, Hashem asked him: 'Why did you eat it?' He said: 'What me? You're complaining to me? Go and complain to her!'

Straight away, we judge harshly. Rabbenu tells us: In the middle of your home, instead of 'broguez' remember mercy! About the exact same point that you're getting upset about it (because we need to tackle this from both sides) instead of judging harshly, have mercy!

Sometimes, we get home - a friend told me this - he was asking for some help with his shalom bayit problems. So what's going on? He told me he gets home in the afternoon and his wife immediately dumps all the problems in the whole world on him.

So I asked him, why is she screaming at you? Does she just like screaming at you? He said no, the kids are driving her crazy. So I told him, instead of getting angry at her that she's screaming at you, feel sorry for her that's she's got to that place where she needs to scream at you. The poor woman! Look what she's having to go through.

This is what Rabbenu means, when he says to switch all the anger and harsh judgments and the jealousy to having a 'good' eye. Whatever negative thing we see in a person, we should always look for the mercy, for the point of good it contains.

THE TORAH OF GEULA

When Rabbenu was in Eretz Yisrael when he returned from Eretz Yisrael, as it's known, that here he grasped all the Torah of geula (redemption) and all of his biggest insights, that he grasped, and all the Torah that will accompany Am Yisrael until the coming of Moshiach, and even afterwards, this is what Rabbenu grasped during his trip to Eretz Yisrael.

When Rabbenu returned home, he said: 'I grasped what I grasped', and the first thing that Rabbenu said, what did he say?

He said: Even a person did every evil thing to me in the world I wouldn't judge him harshly, not even by a hairsbreadth. All the Torah of the geula that Rabbenu grasped in Eretz Yisrael - no end of insights, many of which he couldn't even reveal to us - Rabbenu said, in terms of practically applying the halacha of what he'd grasped - don't judge ANY Jew harshly for ANY reason!

That's what Rabbenu's saying here, that we need to judge every person favorably and to see their good points. And even if you see in them negative things, search inside, Rabbenu says, look and search very carefully so see in what areas this person still has good points

And if you see, if we see in another person this good point, their good deeds, Rabbenu tells us something irresistible:

This applies even if we're talking about a complete rasha (evildoer).

WE NEED TO HAVE A 'GOOD EYE' EVEN FOR THE EVIL PEOPLE IN OUR MIDST

What's a 'complete evildoer'? We're not talking about someone who's 100% evil. A Jew can't be 100% evil, but he IS 90% problematic; 90% of all his deeds, all his actions are problematic. But he still has 10% that's OK. Rabbenu tells us: If you see that 10% he's got, then by doing that, you're going to raise him up, REALLY, from the side of guilt to the side of merit.

We have to understand this a little.

What exactly is meant that we'll raise him from the side of guilt to the side of merit?

A couple of weeks ago, we told a story that's found in the Gemara, in Tractate Chagiga. This story can really help us to understand what Rabbenu is saying here. And this story contains some very deep learning. It's a short story, but very deep.

SEEING REBBE MEIR IN A GOOD LIGHT

The Gemara in Tractate Chagiga tells us on page 15, that one of the Sages, Rava Bar Shila was his name, met Eliyahu Hanavi. Rava Bar Shila asked Eliyahu Hanavi: "Tell me, what is Hashem doing right now, in shemayim (heaven)?"

So Eliyahu Hanavi told Rava Bar Shila: "Hashem right now is giving over divrei Torah in the name of the Sages (who originated them). Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai said such-and-such. Rav Yehuda said such-and-such. Then Eliyahu Hanavi added: "but the divrei Torah from Rebbe Meir, God isn't saying those."

So Rava Bar Shila asked him, he asked Eliyahu Hanavi: "Why isn't Hashem giving over divrei Torah in the name of Rebbe Meir?"

He told him: "Because Rebbe Meir learned Torah from Elisha ben Avuyah, who became a heretic and who went and did a bunch of aveirot (transgressions). And even after all that, Rebbe Meir still didn't abandon him and continued to learn words of Torah from him."

Why?

Because Elisha ben Avuyah was a really big Sage and Rebbe Meir wanted to continue to learn from his wisdom, from his Torah knowledge. So Eliyahu said to him: "Because he learned Torah from him after he became a heretic, so now, Hashem doesn't want to give over divrei Torah in the name of Rebbe Meir."

So Rava Bar Shila replied: "But you know that Rebbe Meir was clever enough to take the good, and the truth from Elisha ben Avuya - he knew how to take that - and the bad and the lies, he knew how to discard it. That's why it's written in the name of Rebbe Meir: 'If you find a pomegranate, you can eat the seeds and throw the peel away.'

"The meaning of this is that he knew how to clarify and separate out all the good and the truth from the Torah of Elisha ben Avuyah." After Eliyahu Hanavi heard this, he said to him: "Now, Hashem is giving over divrei Torah in the name of Rebbe Meir! 'Meir, my son, said'... At this very moment - just as you said that, Hashem started to say divrei Torah in the name of Rebbe Meir."

We need to take a closer look at this story.

WHY DID IT TAKE 100 YEARS?

Rava bar Shilah lived approximately 100 years after Rebbe Meir. It was a different period of time, around 100 years' later. During all that 100 years, Hashem didn't say divrei Torah in the name of Rebbe Meir because he learned Torah from Elisha ben Avuya.

So what, Hashem didn't know that Rebbe Meir know how to clarify the truth and the good from the Torah of Elisha ben Avuyah?!

If Rava bar Shilah knew this - and we see that he was correct, because Hashem agreed with him, so he was speaking the truth. So, up until now God didn't know this?! He didn't know that Rebbe Meir knew how to clarify the Torah of Elisha ben Avuyah?!

Of course He knew! God knows everything. If so, why did He wait until Rava bar Shilah would say this and then immediately start to give over divrei Torah in the name of Rebbe Meir? Why did He wait for 100 years, before He started doing that? Really, it's a huge kushia (difficulty).

But the answer teaches us a very big secret: Hashem for sure knows how to judge every single person favorably. That's obvious. If we know to do this, then of course Hashem knows how to do this. But what does Hashem say?

HASHEM CAN ONLY JUDGE FAVORABLY AFTER WE JUDGE FAVORABLY

He says, in a manner of speaking: "Me? I don't have permission to judge people favorably. Not until someone comes to the world and starts to judge another person favorably." At the moment a person does this - Reuven comes and starts judging Shimon favorably and sees his good points, so then immediately Hashem sees them too.

It's like God is saying to us: "until you see them yourselves until someone in this world sees (the good points), so then I also don't see them."

This is the depth of the meaning behind the words that Hashem said: "I built the world in such a way that you are my partners in the way that the world is run. Until you start judging each other favorably, I also can't see it! I need you, in order that I can also start judging people favorably and seeing their good points!"

This is a truly awesome idea! Rabbenu says, when you see a good point in a Jew, you are tipping him from the side of guilt to the side of merit. What does he mean? Exactly what he says!

Until someone comes along and sees a point of good in ploni, until that happens, also in shemayim they also aren't paying attention to it. At the moment that someone comes along and sees a good point in ploni, at that exact same moment, Shemayim also starts to pay attention. It's introduced in the Heavenly court.

EVERY SINGLE JEW CAN BE A DEFENSE ATTORNEY FOR AM YISRAEL

To put it simply, every Jew - as we learned in the Gemara, and like Rabbenu also teaches us - **every single Jew can be a defense attorney at every instant for Am Yisrael.**

How? Very simply: by judging others favorably. By seeing the good points in the other person. So, this is what Rabbenu says: by doing this you raise him from the side of guilt to the side of merit, until Shemayim sends him help to do complete teshuva. And all of this happens why?

Because you looked at him with a good eye!

If a person has a good eye, he'll get Upstairs after 120 years and they'll tell him: "Listen, you helped a whole bunch of people come back! You helped 3000 people do teshuva!" He'll say: "Me?! I never did any kiruv at all..."

They'll tell him: it's all via your 'good eye', the way you looked at other people, in the merit of that they did teshuva. It's considered as though you brought them back.

Everyone who has a good eye, he helps so many people come back (to God)

That's what Rabbenu is telling us here. You raise him from the side of guilt to the side of merit, and by doing that, you're bringing him back in complete teshuva! You can help him do teshuva! This is the work that every single one of us needs to do.

Every single one of us needs to try to judge others favorably, and it's truly the work of a lifetime, you need to know.

THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE

The yetzer hara, which is engaged against us in a war every second, it's trying to show us: "See! You need to judge everyone favorably - but not Reuven! Reuven, pah, that guy has NOTHING about him you can judge favorably..."

"These things happen. I can tell you that from my own experience. Yes, Rabbenu says we have to judge everyone favorably, that's the rule, but every rule has its exception - and he's it! You don't need to judge him favorably."

But Rabbenu says: No! This is one rule that doesn't have exceptions. You have to apply this teaching to every single Jew.

It's possible that when a person is on a higher spiritual level like that, he's able to see more and more the good points in others.

THE 'UNIQUE' PERSON WHO MAKES TESHUVA

There's a Gemara in Tractate Yoma, where Rebbe Meir says - the same Rebbe Meir we were talking about - Rebbe Meir says that even if just one 'unique' person does teshuva, he's forgiven, and all the world is also forgiven.

It's asked about this Gemara, Rabbi Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin says about this Gemara: 'I don't understand this Gemara!' There's one unique ('yechid') person who does teshuva. Let's say he lives in Holon. And he does teshuva - he's forgiven, and all the world with him.

Now there's a Jew living it up in some festival in Columbia - why is that Jew being forgiven too, because some Jew here made teshuva? What's the connection between this and the other? Everyone has free choice in this world, everyone has their job that they need to do in this world.

What's the connection, that 'he's forgiven and all the world is forgiven with him'? asks Rabbi Tzadok HaKohen about this Gemara.

In order to answer the question, we first have to clarify who is this 'yechid', this unique person who does teshuva and then the whole world is also forgiven in his merit. Who is this 'yechid'?

Every time we talk about a 'yechid' - it's referring to Moshiach ben David. Whenever the word 'yechid' is written in the Gemara, it's hinting at the spiritual soul level of 'yechida', and it's hinting at the Tzaddikim who are unique in the generation, and come from the aspect of Moshiach ben David.

'THERE IS NO JEW WHO IS A CRIMINAL!'

At the moment that he makes teshuva, the whole world is forgiven. Why? Rabbi Tzadok says - and this secret is also written in a few other seforim - that the bigger a tzaddik is and especially, there are souls that come from the aspect of Moshiach ben David - or maybe they themselves are Moshiach ben David, we don't know, until geula comes we have no idea who that's going to be, exactly - but these souls of 'Moshiach ben David' at the time that they make teshuva and start to look at Am Yisrael they immediately start talking to Hashem, from a very 'real', sincere place, and with a very deep perception.

They say to Hashem: "I'm telling You," (the tzaddik tells God), "I'm telling you, there is no Jew who is a criminal. No Jew is guilty! I can show You", the Tzaddik tells God, how inside every single Jew, there is a Divine neshama (soul), and that he sees the good point in them.

And by his 'looking' like this, he judges the whole of Am Yisrael to the side of merit, and helps everyone to make teshuva. It's said, in the important book 'Pri Ha'Aretz' what can we understand about a tzaddik like this who sees the good point in every Jew?

Where does it come from, that perception? What is this perception founded on, that he can see in every person the good point? It says something incredible in the sefer 'Pri Ha'Aretz' - which was a very big person, one of the Baal Shem Tov's students, the Maggid of Mezritch.

THE TZADDIK HAS TO DEAL WITH ALL THE CRAZINESS AND LUSTS IN THE WORLD

He gives over an amazing secret. He says: Each and every Tzaddik, particularly those who are engaged in the rectification of Jewish souls, Hashem puts into their brains, their thought-process all the crazy ideas in the whole world. All the lusts you can find in the world, all the bad middot, all the confusions about emuna (faith).

Everything is passed through the brain of the Tzaddik! We're not saying that he 'falls' into these thoughts, we're in no position to know what really goes on. He's not caught up in actually doing these sins. But inside of himself, he sees how if Hashem wasn't helping him and wasn't guarding him all the time, in one second he could turn into the biggest criminal in Am Yisrael.

It could be that the bigger a tzaddik actually is the more he experiences this, that if not for the protection of Hashem, he could be worse than all the sinners of the generation all the criminals of the generation.

He's also a Tzaddik, so he has a very broad mind, and if he goes down there he can rectify all the sins, big time, because he's such a 'big' person, so he'll also do a 'big' rectification.

Now, what does he see? He sees that Hashem is looking after him, so he doesn't fall into those places. How, asks the Pri Ha'Aretz, how does He do this? How does God show this to the Tzaddik?

He says something amazing: He puts into the mind of the Tzaddik all the desires, all the bad middot, all of the generation's madness - he puts everything into the Tzaddik's mind. So now the tzaddik sees, he sees: "If I didn't have some sort of protection, some sort of Heavenly help, I could also become a transgressor! I could find myself in the lowest pit of gehinnom in less than a second!"

Except, that God is looking after him. And then, He starts to raise him up, higher and higher, this is what the Pri Ha'Aretz says, that Hashem raises up the Tzaddik. And then as the Tzaddik is going higher and higher, he says:

'ME AND HIM, WE'RE EXACTLY THE SAME!'

"Why am I going up, while those people walking around down there on the streets aren't being raised up to Mount Sinai, to receive the Torah? Why am I going up to all these very high spiritual levels while these people are still walking around the streets? Me and him - we're exactly the same! Just a few short hours ago, I saw that me and him we're exactly the same!"

So then, the Pri Ha'Aretz says, by doing this he REALLY doesn't know why he's going 'up', and not the other guy. That's what's written, that: 'I don't understand it...'

And with this outlook, he sees the good point in every single Jew.

From the experiences that he himself has had he sees how there is good inside every single Jew, and so he can judge them favorably, and look at them with a good eye, at each and every Jew. And that's how he engenders a yearning to do teshuva into all of Am Yisrael, this Tzaddik. And this is the strength of our biggest tzaddikim.

This is what's written in the Gemara: "Rebbe Meir said: Even if one (the 'yechid') does teshuva, he's forgiven and all the world with him." Why is he forgiven? Because he sees the good that's inside every Jew.

He says: "You see that Jew doing something stupid? He's doing something stupid, and I'm not - but do you know why? I'll tell you something: I also don't know why!" This biggest tzaddik in the world says, "I also don't know! I don't know why I've gone up to the highest spiritual levels, while he's still walking around on the streets, and he can't guard his eyes. It's a decree, I don't understand it!"

And by way of the Tzaddik expressing this, says the Pri Ha'Aretz, by doing this, the Tzaddik and all of Am Yisrael become unified (have 'achdut') - with one soul.

This is the secret of Moshe Rabbenu, who all the time used to pray for Am Yisrael with self-sacrifice. Why did he used to pray for Am Yisrael with this mesirut nefesh? The Pri Ha'Aretz says, because Moshe Rabbenu knew that he was no better than anyone else! And by way of this he engendered merit, and a yearning to do teshuva in all of Am Yisrael, and by doing this, everyone did teshuva.

HAVING A GOOD EYE IS ALSO OUR JOB

It's like what we're seeing. Baruch Hashem, we're seeing the aspect of geula, there's so many baal teshuvahs. All the force (*koach*) of these baal teshuvahs, where does it originate from? From these tzaddikim, who went through all of these things and who have now engendered a yearning to do teshuva, inside every single Jew.

This is what Rabbenu is talking about! But we're not on that level. We're not on the level of these tzaddikim, but Rabbenu is teaching us that us also - us small, simple people - **we also have a job to do.**

To go everywhere with this idea, to have a good eye.

To judge every single Jew favorably. And by doing this, we can increase the 'good eye' found within Am Yisrael. Rabbenu says, this is what's called 'ahavat chinam' (free love) - it's the rectification for the destruction of the second Temple. **Looking with a good eye is all the tikkun (rectification) of the Temple.**

THE FRIENDS OF REBBE MEIR

And by doing this, we bring each other back to do teshuva. There's a teaching, a dvar Torah, in the Gemara, Masechet Eruvin, the Gemara says: "It's revealed and known before the Creator of the world that in Rebbe Meir's generation, there was no-one else who was as wise as him."

That's what the Gemara says. And why wasn't there someone as wise as him? Because his 'friends' couldn't follow his train of thought. Who was the 'friend' of Rebbe Meir? Who didn't know how to follow his train of thought, according to the Gemara? Rabbi Shimon, Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Yose...

Huge sages! Yet even so, the Gemara says that Rebbe Meir was so wise, they didn't know how to follow his train of thought! But if he was so wise, why couldn't he teach people how to follow his line of thinking?

The Gemara gives an example, of what this really means. The Gemara tells us that they would come to Rebbe Meir and ask him questions. They would ask him about 'things' that according to halacha, were tamei (spiritually impure). Let's say, this cup is tamei, and they'd come and ask him: "Is this tamei or tahor (spiritually pure)?"

Rebbe Meir would tell them: "It's tahor!" He would tell them things that were the opposite of the truth! He'd say that 'this is tahor!' and that he guarantees that it's tahor. Okay....half an hour would pass and they'd bring a tahor 'thing' to Rebbe Meir. They'd bring him a tahor vessel, and they'd ask him: "Rebbe Meir, is this tamei or tahor?"

He'd tell them: "It's tamei! And I guarantee that it's tamei!" Each time, he'd tell them the opposite of the halacha! And guarantee it, too.

Immediately after this, the Gemara concludes: "Rebbe Meir is not his true name! His real name is Rebbe Nechemia or Rebbe Nehorai. He is only called 'Rebbe Meir' because he 'enlightens' people as to the real halacha."

REBBE MEIR IS CONFUSING PEOPLE!

He's teaching people the right halacha?! Just before, it says Rebbe Meir is confusing people! Now you're saying he's enlightening people about the real halacha? The Maharsha, one of the big Gemara commentators asks about this: How can you say he's enlightening people when really he's confusing them?

The Maharsha says this, a very big secret: By way of confusing them - and he knew he was confusing them - they'd start to dig down to the real depth of the subject. They'd start to ask themselves, what did Rebbe Meir intend to do, by confusing us like this? And by checking like this they'd come to the truth within the truth.

Rebbe Meir's confusion led them to the real truth. This is what the Maharsha says. Everything we just said up to now about this Gemara is the simple explanation, but every story in the Gemara also contains deep secrets. All the Gemara is pshat, remez, drush, sod.

There's something very deep going on here. Rebbe Meir was a Gadol HaDor. They'd bring him an impure thing - a really tamei thing! And he used to say it was tahor, pure! And show them the inside of it.

What's the real, deep intention here? They would bring him a 'tamei' thing - that means they'd bring him a person who seemed to be spiritually impure, very far away from Hashem and very far away from having good middot. And this was called 'from the aspect of tamei'.

And what did Rebbe Meir say? He's tahor! (spiritually pure), And he would show them the inside. What did he show them? How on the inside, this person was really still tahor - spiritually pure. And by doing this, this distant person, this person from the aspect of 'tamei', spiritual impurity, would receive the strength he needed to return in teshuva.

The Tzaddik of the generation would tell him that he's pure, and show him this 'pure' good point that he still had, inside.

On the other hand, 'tahor' people would come to him - this is talking about big tzaddikim, who would come to the wisest Sage of the generation. And what would he tell them? "You're tamei!" He'd show them internally what they still needed to fix and rectify, and that in that aspect they were still tamei.

This is the work of the Tzaddik, to show us the good point we still have inside, the points that come by way of being judged favorably. And by doing this, a person gets the strength they need to make teshuva. All the strength we have to make teshuva comes from the Tzaddik seeing the good points we still possess, and that's how we're 'enlightened' and woken up.

WE ALSO NEED TO FIND THE GOOD POINTS IN OURSELVES

But in truth, this isn't enough. **Rabbenu says: A person needs to also find in himself the good points.**

Because the yetzer hara wants to tip him into sadness and black bitterness (depression), but nevertheless, it's forbidden to fall into these, and we need to search and to find in ourselves some good deed.

Here, Rabbenu is telling us practically a secret that he tells us in many other places, too. Rabbenu is revealing to us, he's telling us what the single biggest 'yetzer hara' of the generation, of these last few generations, actually is.

If you'd ask us, we'd say: 'it's the lust for money', or 'it's the lust for immorality', 'maybe it's anger' - and so on. Of course, these are all yetzer haras. But they aren't the biggest yetzer. Rabbenu says this in a few different places.

THIS IS THE BIGGEST YETZTER HARA OF THE GENERATION

He says that the biggest yetzer hara of the generation is the one that wants to pull a person into sadness, bitter depression and despair.

There is no spiritual 'fall' greater, that the yetzer wants to pull a person into, than that a person should stop believing in himself and should enter into sadness and depression. This is the single biggest spiritual danger for a person.

The moment you fall into this, there is nothing more dangerous, spiritually.

Why is this? A person fails, and falls into sin. But as soon as he sins, he can make teshuva. You can make teshuva when you sin! It's the opposite (of what the yetzer tells us). The Gemara tells us: If you do a sin and and you feel ashamed, immediately all your sins are forgiven.

As soon as you feel ashamed of your failure, they forgive you for all of your sins!

But Rabbenu says, if, God forbid, a person falls into bitterness... There's stages here. First, he falls into bitterness and he becomes very heavy-hearted. Then, he gets to the next, even worse spiritual stage, and starts to feel sad, and then afterwards he 'merits' to get to despair...

These are called the three stages of the klipa (realm of evil): heavy-heartedness, sadness, and then despair. As soon as a person gets to this stage Rabbenu says: There is no greater danger, both spiritually and materially, than this!

SADNESS AND DEPRESSION ARE THE BIGGEST YETZER HARA

This is the most dangerous yetzer hara that a person can fall into, these sorts of negative feelings. More than 200 years' ago, Rabbenu revealed that the ikker (essence) of our test in this generation would be precisely this. That the yetzer hara would really try to pull us into this sort of negative thinking, so that we'd stop believing in ourselves, and start to feel sad and depressed, and from here, God forbid, he can pull a person into the lowest pits of hell, mamash.

The moment a person falls into sadness, depression, heavy-heartedness a person then loses their ability to keep fighting, to exist, to do, to continue in this world. So the first thing we need to know, Rabbenu says, is that even more than the yetzer hara wants our sins what it really wants is the sadness and depression that comes afterwards.

So how do we fight against this?

PEOPLE WANT TO GET AWAY FROM THEMSELVES

Today, thank God we're seeing that nearly the whole world suffers from this problem. They're going to psychologists, psychiatrists, coaches, workshops. And if that doesn't help, then they start smoking grass.

All these things, what are they? It's escapism! People want to get away from themselves! People can't stand their own company. So maybe, I'll go talk to a psychologist. That doesn't help... So now, I go to a psychiatrist who'll give me some pill. The pills don't work... so now I'll try a workshop. That also doesn't help. So finally, they start smoking grass until they have no more idea what's going on in the world.

Someone told me: Every time I go to sleep I tell my wife to only wake me up when Moshiach comes. I don't want to have to deal with the world anymore. I don't want to see the world again until Moshiach comes.

Where is this coming from? Rabbenu told us, more than 200 years ago, about this phenomenon, about what the biggest test of the last generation would be, that the yetzer hara would want to pull us down and confuse our thinking. We need to know this.

It's not so interested in our sins. Our sadness is its food, it gives much more sustenance to the yetzer hara than all the sins in the world.

Rabbi Natan writes in the Likutey Halachot that the yetzer hara's sustenance comes from our sadness. So, Rabbenu saw that this would be the essence of our test in these generations. In many instances, we see the following happen: sometimes, the yetzer hara comes to the person and tries to get them to fall.

IF THE YETZER CAN'T GET YOU TO FALL, HE'LL START UP WITH YOUR FAMILY INSTEAD

Maybe, he's already a 'Breslover', and nothing is bothering him because he's following all the advice of Rabbenu. So what does the yetzer hara do? The Ramchal tells us, it moves over to his family instead.

It'll start making all this effort to make problems between the person and his family - with his wife, his children, his parents, even with the Grandpa and Grandma, with the grandchildren, it depends who, even the uncles and aunts. It causes all sorts of these sorts of problems so a person will be...

[The yetzer says]: You're strong! you went to Uman! You got stronger in looking for the good points? So I'm going to move over to your family to your relatives. The Ramchal tells us the moment the yetzer sees that a person is strong, he starts up with his relatives instead.

Today, we see a terrible thing: the yetzer hara is damaging things within families. All the time, people come to me and tell me: "All my life is in ruins", so I ask why is all your life in ruins? And they tell me this and that happened within their family.

I tell them: this stuff already happened, OK. Who says this destroyed your whole life? Is this some secret of the gematria, that your problem adds up to 'the destruction of your whole life'?! How'd you get to the idea that this means your whole life is destroyed? This thing that happened to you? Let's see if that's actually the reality.

THE SCANDALOUS FAMILY LIFE OF A WELL-KNOWN RABBI

I want to tell you something. Once I said this to someone who was very stubborn. I told him: "Listen, I knew this Rabbi and let me tell you what happened to him at home..."

He said, OK, what happened to him? I told him: "He was married twice. He had a son from his first marriage and a son and daughter from his second marriage. OK, it happens a lot, that you see things like this."

He asked me: 'So what was the problem?' I'll tell you:

"The son from the first marriage raped the daughter from the second marriage and then her brother killed him. Did you ever hear of such a thing?! That the son from the second marriage killed the son from the first marriage?"

He told me: "It's completely impossible that something like that happened to a Rabbi in Israel!"

So I told him: "Listen, I know this happened personally." He told me: "It's impossible! I don't believe you." So I told him, "Yes! It happened to King David!" This is King David's story. This is exactly what happened to King David in his household.

Amnon and Tamar, and then Avshalom killed Amnon - this is exactly the story of what happened. All of us read this, heard about this, it took us exactly 35 seconds to read this story. But can we really begin to imagine what happened to King David, when this thing happened to his family?

Can anyone begin to grasp this matter? And it's written in the Book of Shmuel, just how much David loved Avshalom. He loved Avshalom very much. And this is just one story from King David. How many things occurred to King David within his household...

If King David took these things at face value - this is destruction! There hasn't been a destruction like this since the world was created until the coming of Moshiach. Can anything be more awful than this? To put it simply, God forbid that something like this should happen to anyone.

If something like this happened to us, or even a fraction of what happened to King David, what would happen to us? We'd end up institutionalized in some psychiatric wing having lots of treatments for many, many years, because we couldn't cope with things like this.

What happened with King David? He's the King Moshiach! David is the Moshiach! We see, what did King David do? What he could fix, he fixed. Then he immediately got up for chatzot (the midnight lament), continued to get up for chatzot, continued with his prayers, continued to lead Am Israel.

Why?

GOD DOES THINGS THAT ARE NOTHING TO DO WITH US

Because King David had enormous daat (insightful knowledge) about this issue. What was his daat? He knew that there are things that God does, that are nothing to do with him. What this means is that it wasn't connected to David's deeds. 'This didn't happen because of me!'

Whatever God does, it's really not your concern. There are things that Hashem does that we aren't responsible for, we aren't responsible for every single thing that Hashem does.

So Rabbenu tells us, just how careful we need to be not to take every single thing that happens too much to heart. We always need to try to do good, to improve, to pray to help in whichever way we can help. If someone listens to us, we need to try to tell them the correct things, we have to educate our children.

Rabbenu doesn't say that we need to stop making our own effort. We're not cancelling our own effort! But with all the effort we're making, we still need to know that God has His own matters to arrange. He has His own work to do, and our work is to know how to accept that. To know how to accept this with love, that God does things like this, and that Hashem knows a bit more than we do how to run the world.

And we have to learn how to accept Hashem's leadership. And not only this. Rabbenu also tells us: 'look at the good points that you have within you'. Look at your family, at wherever you're having the problem, search out the good points.

Rabbenu says, and every one of us also needs to search out the good that is inside of HIMSELF.

THE POINT OF FREE CHOICE

What's with these good points, that we possess inside ourselves? This is a rule, and a very big secret that we need to know. Rav Dessler, the author of the book 'A Letter from Eliyahu', he asked the following question:

"Where is the point of free choice for an individual?" Where can a person really choose how to act, which is essentially the work we need to do, to choose between good and bad. So where is this point of free choice?

Rav Dessler discusses this and he says that the point of choice for an individual, it's essence and it's expression is found in that person's ratzon (will): 'What does the person WANT?'

Every moment that a person wants good, he's coming from a place of good.

In the meantime, it could be that all this stuff happens to you, all this stuff that's really not so good... But effectively, for as long as you still want good, know that you're still connected to the good place.

The Baal Shem Tov taught that the place that you're thinking about, that's where you really are. Rabbenu added to this: **The place where you WANT to be, is where you really are.**

Our ratzon, our will, connects us to a completely different reality. Sometimes, we can walk around the world completely confused: a person doesn't know his right from his left, nothing's working out for him. But inside, he WANTS good, he WANTS the truth, he WANTS to be in a completely different place.

Except what: Heaven isn't giving it to him.

Many times in life, there are occasions when they put shackles on our arms and legs, and they don't let us move from our place. Rabbenu tells us, know, changing your place whether in gashmius (materialism) or ruchnius (spirituality), many times it doesn't depend on us at all.

We aren't responsible. There's a Creator of the world, and He's deciding how things work out here in the world.

Rav Dessler says: 'What really depends upon a person himself?' What internal strength really depends on the person themselves? He answers that **the strength that a person really has is just his ratzon (will).**

A PERSON'S WILL (RATZON) DECIDES EVERYTHING

At the moment that a person wants good, you should know according to how much will (ratzon) you have, that's deciding the place where you really are.

If you want 'good' 50%, you're 50% in that good place, already. And there comes a stage where a person's ratzon, in one fell swoop will take him to a completely different place. These things happen!

A person could be stuck 10, 20 years, they can't move from their place, but all the time he continues to want, and to request and then in one fell swoop, he finds himself in a completely different place.

We said that Rabbenu told us that we have to look inside ourselves, for the good points. How to actually do this is for a person to see just how much his wishes and desires are actually for the good.

Because it doesn't always happen that our actions really get there, so we need to see just how much from the side of ratzon, will, we really WANT the truth, the good. At the moment we learn how to feel this out, Rabbenu tells us, this will give us tremendous strength and by way of this tremendous strength, suddenly, we can get all the way up to shemayim (the Heavens), as though we're sitting on some rocket that in a second takes us to a completely different place.

A person can't believe how that just happened! But Rabbenu tells us: you want to know how that just happened? **It's thanks to all the desire for good you had, throughout all those years.**

Maybe you had good desires for 10 years, and didn't even move a centimeter. Then one day you woke up in the morning, and you found yourself in a completely different world! How did this happen?! It's your 10 years of wanting, that helped you get all these things.

THE TZADDIK WHO MAKES MELODIES

To conclude, Rabbenu says something wonderful here. He says: "there's a Tzaddik who makes niggunim (melodies) from every good point that exists inside every Jew."

The Tzaddik sees the good points. That we're also seeing the good points, this gets added on the Tzaddik's vision and by way of this, melodies are made. And there is one particular melody that is formed from all of these niggunim **and at the moment that this niggun (melody) is revealed,**

at that moment the Beit HaMikdash (temple) will come down to the world, and Moshiach will be revealed.

So we're waiting for this melody! And what is this melody created from? **It's created from the good points of every single Jew.**

We need to understand this, a little. We see a good point. We don't hear any music as a result of doing this... what melody is Rabbenu talking about?! Rabbenu is making a very deep point:

BRINGING MERCY DOWN FROM THE WORLD OF 'KETER'

There's a higher spiritual world which is called the world of Keter ('crown'). It's a very lofty world which contains infinite mercy for Am Israel. We bring down a 'shaft' of this mercy from Keter to us, that's our work. This is also the secret of the 13 attributes of mercy that we say in our prayers, that also comes down from there

It's called the 'secret of dikna', that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai revealed on the very last day of his life. He revealed the secret of the 'Keter', the secret of mercy. Rabbenu tells us an amazing chiddush (novel teaching).

Rabbenu tells us: When you see the good in a Jew, or you see the good in yourself, you're bringing this melody down from the world of Keter. You're bringing down this yearning down from the world of Keter, and this yearning joins in with all the good points that were found in Am Israel from the creation of the world until now.

WHEN THIS MELODY IS COMPLETED, THE BEIT HAMIKDASH WILL IMMEDIATELY DESCEND

And the Tzaddik combines everything, he knows how to combine all these melodies, all of this yearning, to make one single, communal melody, and **at the moment that this matter is completed, the Beit HaMikdash will immediately descend.**

So, Rabbenu says here that the whole process of geula is built upon these good points. Why? Because the good points are themselves the tikkun (rectification) for sinat chinam. What was the sinat chinam they had at the Beit HaMikdash? **That they didn't walk around with this practise of seeing the good in the other person.**

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MITZVOT BETWEEN MAN AND HIS FELLOW MAN

On the one side, on many occasions during the period of the second Temple they were on a very high spiritual level. But sometimes when a person 'ascends', spiritually in connection with the mitzvot between God and man, and gets to a very high place, what can happen?

It's written in the mussar books, what can happen? The mitzvot between a man and his fellow man can get harmed.

A person can be a big tzaddik, when it comes to the mitzvot between man and Hashem. He gets up for the midnight lamentation, he learns, he prays, baruch Hashem, this is a very high level! But, it's written in the mussar books, that it can happen that you go up so high in regard to the mitzvot between man and Hashem that the yetzer then comes and ruins your mitzvot between man and his fellow man.

'Now I'm a Tzaddik, I can't stand these other guys! He's upsetting me! What sort of Jew is this?! He's bothering me, he's stopping me from being an angel.'

He's stopping you from being an angel?! First, go and be a human being, so you'll get on well together, God tells this person. We don't need you being an angel, and that guy being left somewhere on the side. He'll get some corner of the lower Gan Eden while you're in the higher Gan Eden.

God wants Am Israel to have achdut (unity).

The whole rectification of the world, writes one of the big kabbalists, he says something awesome: **Hashem put us here in this world of division / separation solely in order that we would search out all the ways we can achieve unity, within this world of division.**

And this is what Rabbenu is teaching us: this is having a good eye, and judging other people favorably. That a person sees good in himself, in others, in his family - every human being! We have to judge everyone to the side of merit, even someone who is a complete rasha (evildoer)!

To see the good points and to raise up each good point so that it can be joined to the single, communal melody, this single, complete melody. Rabbenu says that at the moment that this melody is completed, that's been built from all these good points, Moshiach will come!

THE PATH TO GEULA

This is the path to geula (redemption).

People ask: 'How can we bring the geula?' Achdut! And we get achdut by following this Torah from Rabbenu, by way of having a good eye.

So, all the destruction happened because they lacked this aspect. They had a very, very high spiritual level, they had the Beit HaMikdash, they had open miracles. But they were lacking, very lacking, in the matter of how a man treated his fellow man.

This is the matter of sinat chinam, and thus, we ended up in this exile. It should be God's will that with His mercy and kindness, this year we won't have to fast on Tisha B'av, and not on the 10th of Av either.

[Amen!]



K'ayal Ta'arog is the Torah institution of Rav Ofer Erez, shlita, and is engaged in spreading the light of Torah across Eretz Yisrael via shiurim, newsletters, CDs, youtube videos and books.

We are working to bring more of Rav Ofer Erez's Torah to the English-speaking public. If you'd like to learn more, please contact us at: ofererez174@gmail.com, or call us at: 02-650-2929.

You can see Rav Ofer Erez's website at: www.ofererez.co.il

Also visit his new youtube channel for English speakers, **Rav Ofer Erez English**, where we hope to have more English-subtitled clips and shiurim soon.

Lastly, Rav Ofer has two books in English coming out soon:

- The mountain of Myrrh
- From the depths

Please check back with the website to learn more.