

# טעמו וראו

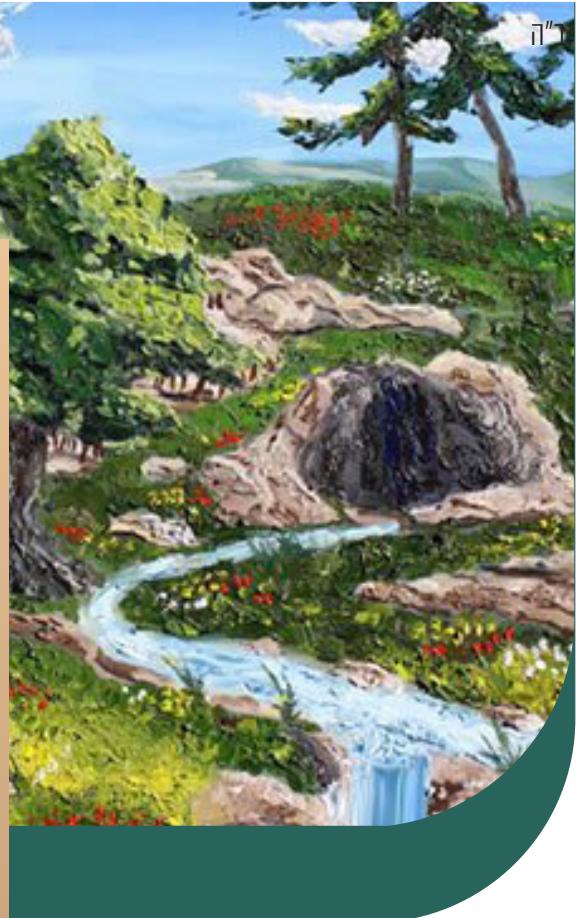
A taste of the  
Rebbe's teachings

Parshat Behar  
Bechukotai

>>

## Three Layers of Comfort

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, his son Rabbi Elazar, and the Rebbe each provide a message of encouragement to the Jewish people. The inspiration begins with the Talmud, continues through the Zohar, and receives a new layer of insight through the teachings of Chassidism.



מוקדש לחיזוק ההתקשרות

לכ"ק אדמו"ר

צוקללה נבג"מ זי"ע

ע"י הרב לוי יצחק הלווי  
וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחינו ריביטשיק

# Part 1: G-d is with You

## Source 1 Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 33b

Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Shimon sat together. Yehuda *ben geirim* sat beside them. Rabbi Yehuda commented, "The Romans have done such wonderful things; they've built marketplaces, bridges, and bathhouses." Rabbi Yosi was silent, but Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai responded, "They've done it all for themselves. They established marketplaces to house prostitutes, bathhouses to pamper themselves, and bridges to collect taxes." Yehuda *ben geirim* repeated their conversation, and word reached the government. They declared, "Yehuda, who promoted us, shall be promoted. Yosi, who remained silent, shall be exiled to Tzippori. Shimon, who denounced us, shall be killed."

Rabbi Shimon and his son hid in the study hall. Each day, his wife would bring them bread and a jug of water and they would eat. When the danger intensified, he said to his son, "She might be tortured and reveal our whereabouts." They went and hid in a cave. Miraculously, a carob tree and a spring of water were created for them. They would remove their clothes, cover themselves in sand up to their necks, and study Torah all day. At prayer-time, they would dress and pray, and then again remove their clothes so that they wouldn't wear out.

They sat in the cave for twelve years. Then, Elijah the Prophet came to the cave's entrance and said: "Who will inform Bar Yochai that the emperor died and his decree was annulled?" They emerged, and saw people plowing and sowing. Rabbi Shimon said, "They abandon eternal life to

יתבי רבי יהודה ונבי יוסי ורבי שמעון, ותיב יהודה בנו גרים גביהו. פתח רבי יהודה ואמר: בפה נאים מעשיהם של אומה זו: תקנו שווקים, תקנו גשרים, תקנו מרחצאות. רבי יוסי שתק. עננה רבי שמעון בנו יוחאי ואמר: כל מה שתקנו, לא תקנו אלא לצורך עצמן. תקנו שווקין - להשיב בך זונות, מרחצאות - לעודו בך עצמן, גשרים - ליטול מהן מכם. הכל יהודה בנו גרים וסיפר דבריהם, ונשמעו למלוכות. אמרו: יהודה שעיללה - יתעללה. יוסי שתק - יגלה לאכיפורי. שמעון שגינה - יקבר.

ازל הוא ובנה, טשו כי מדרך. כל יומא היה מתיא להו דביתהו ריפתא וכונא דמיא וכרכ. כי תקיר גוירטה אמר לה לריה: נשים דעתן קלה עליה, דילמא מצערி לה ומגלייא לנו. אוזלו טשו במערתא. איתרחש ניסא איברי להו חרובנא ועינא דמיא, והוא משליך מנינו והוא יתבי עד צואריהו בחלא. כולי יומא גרס. בעידן צלוי לבקש מיפטו ומצליו, והנהר משליך מנינו כי היכי דלא ליבלו.

איתיבו תריסר שני במערתא. אתה אליהו וكم אפתחה דמערתא, אמר: מאן לו דעה לבר יוחי דמית קיסר ובטיל גוירטה. נפקו, חזו אינשי דקא קרבי וזרע, אמרין: מגיחן. כי עולם ועובדין בתמי שעה.

pursue short-term gain?!" A fire consumed everything they looked at. A Divine Voice emerged and told them, "Did you come out to destroy My world? Return to your cave!"

They went back to the cave for twelve months. Then, they reasoned, "The wicked are judged in purgatory for twelve months." A Divine Voice emerged and said to them, "Emerge from your cave." They emerged. Whatever Rabbi Elazar would strike, Rabbi Shimon would heal. He said, "My son, the two of us [studying Torah] is enough for the world."

As the sun set on Shabbat eve, they saw an old man rushing with two bundles of myrtle branches. They asked him, "What are those for?" He answered, "In honor of Shabbat." They said to him, "Isn't one enough?" He answered, "They correspond with [Torah's commands regarding Shabbat:] Remember it and safeguard it." Rabbi Shimon said to his son: "Look how precious mitzvot are to the Jewish people."

כל מקום שנוטני עיניהם  
מיד נשרף. יצתה בת קול  
ואמרה להם: להחריב עולם  
יצאתם?! חיוו למעניכם!

בדור איזול איתיבו תריסר  
ירחי שטא. אמרי: משפט  
רשעים בגיהנם שניים עשר  
חיש. יצתה בת קול ואמרה:  
צאו ממעניכם! נפקו. כל  
היכא דהנה מיח רבי אלעזר,  
הוה מס' רבינו שמעון. אמר לו:  
בני, די לעולם אני ואתה.

בחד פניא דמעלי שבתא  
חו' והוא סבא דהנה נקייט  
תרי מכאן אסא ורהייט בין  
הشمישות. אמרו ליה: הני למה  
לן? אמר לו: לכבוד שבת.  
ותיסגי לנו בחד - חד בגדר  
"זכור" וחד בגדר "שמור".  
אמר ליה לבניה: חזי פמה  
חביבין מצות על ישראל.

## Source 2 Talmud, Tractate Megillah 29a

Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai says: Come see how precious the Jewish people are to G-d: Wherever they were exiled, the Divine Presence went with them.

The Divine Presence went with them to Egypt, as it says: "Did I not reveal Myself to your father's house in Egypt?"

The Divine Presence went with them to Babylon, as it is stated: "For your sake I was sent to Babylon."

And likewise, when they will be redeemed in the future, the Divine Presence will be with them, as it says: "The L-rd your G-d will return with your captivity." It doesn't say, "He will bring them back," rather, "He will return." This teaches that G-d will return together with them from the exiles.

תני רבי שמואל בן יוחאי אומר:  
בוא וראה כמה חביבין ישראל  
לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא, שבכל  
מקום שגלו, שכינה עמָה.

גלו למצרים - שכינה עמָה,  
שנאמר: הנגלה נגלית בית  
אביך בהיותם למצרים וגו'.

גלו לבל - שכינה עמָה,  
שנאמר: למעניכם שלחת  
בבל.

ונא כשהן עתידין ליגאל -  
שכינה עמָה, שנאמר: ושב  
ה' אלקינו את שבותך. והשיב  
לא נאמר, אלא ושב, מלפיד:  
שהקדוש ברוך הוא שב עמו  
מ בין הגלויות.

## >> The Rebbe

### Rabbi Shimon's Teaching and its Message

"Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai says: Come see how precious the Jewish people are to G-d: Wherever they were exiled, the Divine Presence went with them... The Divine Presence went with them to Babylon..."

When the Jewish people are in exile, G-d does not merely gaze down from His "palace" to watch His people and send them His blessings. Rather, "the Divine Presence went with them," G-d goes into exile with them as well – "Wherever they were exiled, the Divine Presence went with them."

Moreover: G-d feels their pain, "In their suffering, He suffers." G-d puts Himself in a state, so to speak, where the non-Jews begin to ask, "Where is your G-d?"

And Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai continues: "And likewise, when they will be redeemed in the future, the Divine Presence will be with them, as it says: The L-rd your G-d will return with your captivity. It doesn't say, 'He will bring them back,' rather, 'He will return.' This teaches that G-d will return together with them from the exiles."

Even with the knowledge that G-d remains with us in exile, we might assume that at the moment of redemption, G-d will go out ahead of us, even if only for a single moment. In this regard, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai tells every single Jew: You can rest assured that G-d will remain with you during every moment of exile, and He will not leave even a moment early. He will leave only when the entire Jewish people leave as well.

This teaches us that even when we are exiled, we have G-d's full support and He provides us with everything we need to fulfill Torah and its commandments to its utmost; in the words of Rabbi Shimon, "Wherever they were exiled, the Divine Presence went with them."

## Part 2: G-d Loves You

### Source 3

This week's Torah portion: Leviticus 26:44

Despite all this, while they are in their enemies' land, I will not be revolted by them nor will I reject them to obliterate them, to rescind My covenant with them, because I am the L-rd, their G-d.

וְאֶنְגַּד גַּם זֹאת בָּהִיוֹתֶם בָּאָרֶץ  
אֲבִיהֶם לֹא מֵאָסְתִּים וְלֹא גַּעֲלָתִים  
לְכַלְתָּם לְהַפֵּר בְּרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם כִּי אָנִי  
ה' אֱלֹקֶיכֶם.

### Source 4

Talmud, Tractate Megillah 11a

Shmuel said: **I will not be revolted by them nor will I reject them to obliterate them.** “I will not be revolted by them” – in the days of the Greeks, “I will not reject them” – in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, “to obliterate them” – in the days of Haman, “to rescind My covenant with them” – in the days of the Persians, “because I am the L-rd, their G-d” – in the days of Gog and Magog [the Messianic era].

ושׁמְוֹאֵל אָמַר: “לֹא מֵאָסְתִּים וְלֹא  
גַּעֲלָתִים לְכַלְתָּם”. “לֹא מֵאָסְתִּים”  
- בִּימֵי יוֹנָנִים. “וְלֹא גַּעֲלָתִים” -  
בִּימֵי נְבוּכְדָּנָצָר. “לְכַלְתָּם” - בִּימֵי  
הָמָן. “לְהַפֵּר בְּרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם” - בִּימֵי  
פְּרָסִים. “כִּי אָנִי ה' אֱלֹקֶיכֶם” -  
בִּימֵי גֹּג וָמָגוֹג.

## Source 5 Zohar volume 3, 115b

Rabbi Hiyya said: I heard a new explanation from Rabbi Elazar on the verse, “I will not be revolted by them nor will I reject them to obliterate them.”

A man loved a woman who lived in the leather tanner’s market. Had she not lived there, he would have never entered it. But because she was there, its stench seemed to him like the world’s finest scents.

Here too, even while the Jews are in the land of their enemies, a “tanner’s market,” G-d is not revolted. Why? [The Hebrew continuation of the verse, *likhalosam*—to obliterate them, can be read as *kallah*—a bride]. Because His beloved bride, the love of His life, is found there. The terrible stench seems to Him as the finest aromas of the universe, because His bride is there.

Rabbi Yosi said: It was worth coming just to hear this teaching.

אמיר רבי חייא, אנה שמענא מלָה  
חדַתָא, דאמר רבי אלעוז לא  
מאסתים ולא געלתים לקלתם ...

לבר ניש דרחים אטמא, ונהנות  
דיינא בשוקא דבורסק, אי  
לא הוות היא פמן, לא עיל בה  
לעלאמיון. בין דהיא פמן, דמי  
בעינוי בשוקא דרכלי, דכל ריחין  
דעלמיון טבין אשתקחו פמן.

אוֹפֶה כְּכָא, וְאֵפֶגֶם זָאת בְּהִוּתָם  
בָּאָרֶץ אֲוִיבֵיכֶם, דָאֵיהוּ שָׂוֹקָא  
דָבָרְסָקִי, לֹא מְאַסְתִּים וְלֹא  
גֻּלְתִּים. וְאַמְאי. לְכַלְתָּם. בָּגִין  
כַּלְתָּם, דָאֵנוּ רְחִימָנָא לה, דָאֵיהִ  
רְחִימָתָא דְנֶפֶשָׁא, דְשָׁרִיאָ פָמָן,  
וְקַמְיָעַלִי כָּכָל רִיחֵינוּ טָבָאָן דְעַלְמָא,  
בָּגִין הָיָא בָּלה דְבָגְנוּיִיהוּ.

אמיר רבי יוסי, אלו לא אטינא  
הַכָּא, אַלְא לְמִשְׁמָעָ מלָה דָא דִי.

## >> The Rebbe

### Rabbi Elazar's Teaching and its Message

In addition to the teaching of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, there is also a teaching from his son, Rabbi Elazar. [He was also a lofty individual, as Rabbi Shimon personally attested to]. His teaching adds meaning and understanding to the teaching of Rabbi Shimon:

The Zohar cites a teaching from Rabbi Eliezer on the verse, “Despite all this, while they are in their enemies’ land, I will not be revolted by them nor will I reject them to obliterate them.” He explains it with a parable about a bride in a tanner’s market. The market has a foul smell, but because of the groom’s great love for his bride, the odors don’t bother him. To the contrary, they seem to him as the world’s finest aromas.

This means as follows: Exile is compared to a tanner’s market. In spiritual terms, a market is a public property which is open and susceptible to influences that obstruct G-d’s singular presence. And, being a tanner’s market, it has a terrible odor which is a far cry from the G-dly scent of the offerings and the incense in the Holy Temple (and, in our day, from our prayers).

When the People of Israel are in exile, they are like a bride in a tanner’s market. She might be tainted by the stench, but on the other hand, it is only an odor. The exile doesn’t impact us internally like food and drink which is ingested into the body [because, from the day we left Egypt, every Jew was declared a free man who can never truly be subjugated, and furthermore, “there is no freedom like the study of Torah,” our sages said.] The exile is merely a “scent,” its impact is external.

This is the beauty of the Jewish people, says Rabbi Elazar. Not only is G-d always with them (as his father Rabbi Shimon taught), moreover, even when they are tainted with the bad odor of the tanner’s market, G-d still loves them so much that it smells to Him like the best aromas in the universe.

# Part 3: Why G-d Loves

## >> The Rebbe

### A Deeper Understanding in Rabbi Shimon and Rabbi Elazar

On a deeper level: G-d sees that despite the Jewish people being in exile in the tanner's market, surrounded by "negative" odors, they continue to observe the Torah and its commandments and raise their children in the spirit of Torah.

In other words, He sees that the bad odor of exile didn't weaken their connection to Torah and its commandments, but to the contrary, it helped awaken their deepest resolve to strengthen their connection to holiness and to Judaism, and their example inspired other Jews to strengthen their own Torah and mitzvot and to raise their own children in this spirit, illuminating the exile with the light of Judaism, Torah and mitzvot.

This brings G-d the greatest sense of nachas; it is the world's finest aroma, because it emerged from a place of difficulty.

### Source 6 Zohar volume 3, 115b

Someone opened and said: The prophet says, "a son will honor his father and his servant his master." A son must honor his father because Torah commands, "Honor your father and mother," by providing him with food, drink, etc. Don't assume that you are absolved after his passing. To the contrary, although he died, you must honor him even more, because the Torah says to "honor" him. When a son veers off the straight path, it is definitely an embarrassment to his father; it certainly dishonors him.

If the son returns to the straight path and corrects his deeds, he certainly honors his father. He gives him honor in this world, among the people, and in the next world,

פֶתַח וְאָמֵר, בּוֹ יִכְבֹּד אָב וְעֶבֶד  
אָדָנוֹ (מלאכי א':ו'). בּוֹ יִכְבֹּד אָב,  
כִּמְהֵذָאת אָמֵר פְבַד אֶת אָבִיךְ וְתַךְ  
אָמֵן (שמות כ':י"ב), וְאוֹקְמוֹת,  
בְּמִיכְלָא וּמִשְׁתְּפִיא וּבְכָלָא הָאִ  
בְּחִיּוִי דְאֲתַחְיֵיב בֵּיתָה. בְּתַר דְמִיתָה,  
אֵי תִּמְאָה קָא פְטוּר מִגִּיה הָו֏, לֹא  
הָכִי. דְאָף עַל גַב דְמִיתָה, אֲתַחְיֵיב  
בְּיקְרִיה יְתִיּוֹ, דְכְתִיב פְבַד אֶת  
אָבִיךְ. דְאֵי הָהוּא בָרָא אָזִיל בְּאָנָח  
תַּקְלָא, וְדְאֵי מְבִנָה לְאָבוֹי הָו֏,  
וְדְאֵי עֲבִיד לִיה קְלָנָא.

וְאֵי הָהוּא בָרָא אָזִיל בְּאָרֶח מִישָר,  
וְתַחֲנוּ עַוְבָדָיו, וְדְאֵי דָא אָוְקִיר  
לְאָבוֹי, אָוְקִיר לִיה בְּהָאִי עַלְמָא גַבִי  
בְּנֵי נְשָׂא, אָוְקִיר לִיה בְּהָהָא עַלְמָא,  
גַבִי קְוֹדְשָׁא בָרְךָ הָו֏. וְקְוֹדְשָׁא  
בָרְךָ הָו֏ חַיִס עַלְיָה, וְאָוְתִיב לִיה  
בְּכָרְסִיאָה דִיקְרִיה וְדְאֵי.

before G-d. G-d shows him more compassion and seats him in a more honorable place.

A son who honors his father—an example is Rabbi Elazar, who honors his father in this world and in the next. Rabbi Shimon's prestige has now grown in both worlds, in this world and in the next, more than during his lifetime. He merited to have holy children and holy descendants.

Happy are the righteous who merit holy children and holy descendants. In their regard, it is said, "All who see them will recognize that they are seed blessed by G-d." Amen.

בו יכבד אב. כגון רבי אלעזר,  
דאייהו אוקריר ליה לאבוי בהאי  
עלמא, ובנהוּא עלמא. השפא  
אסגי שבחא דרבי שמעון  
ברתינוּן עלמיין, בהאי עלמא,  
ובנהוּא עלמא יתר מתייר מתייר.  
דזוכה לבניינו קדישין, ולגוזעינו  
קדישין.

ונכאיין איננו צדיקין, דזפאנ  
לבניינו קדישין, לגוזעינו קדישין.  
עליהו אתקרי, כל ראייהם  
יכירום כי הם זרע ברוך יי'  
(ישועהו ס"א:ט') אמרן.

## >> The Rebbe

### The Son Who Honors the Father

In light of Rabbi Elazar's expansion upon his father's teaching, the Zohar concludes, "A son who honors his father—an example is Rabbi Elazar who honors his father in this world and in the next." In other words, Rabbi Elazar delivered his teaching after his father's passing (on Lag Ba'omer), when Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was already in "the next world," and nonetheless, Rabbi Elazar continued to honor him ("although he died, you must honor him even more") by revealing and explaining the depth and profundity of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai's teaching (that the Jewish people are so precious to G-d that he accompanies them into exile), strengthening Rabbi Shimon's prestige.

The message from all the above is that we have immense power during times of exile, and we therefore have the ability and the responsibility to add in matters of Torah and its commandments. We will thereby merit the fulfillment of the verse, "G-d will return with your captivity"; G-d will take the entire Jewish people out of exile and leave the exile together with us for the true and complete redemption.

Lag Ba'omer Parade 5744-1984  
Toras Menachem 5744, vol. 3 pg. 1767

מיזם של "משרד השלווחים"

נוסד ביום השבעה לזכרון ולע"נ הרוב גבריאל נח וזונתו ובקה הי"ז  
שלוחי הרבי במומבאי, הודו

