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PIRKEI AVOS

Learning more than One's Custom (Avos 6:5) The 100th time a person reviews his studies is not essentially different from the preceding 99 times, and is not indicative of any extraordinary effort. However, the 101st time he reviews his studies indicates that a change has taken place in his soul, and therefore in the revelation of G-dliness in the world. From this point on, his Divine service is very different from the way it was previously. See "Tanya", chap.15, and "Maskil I'Eitan" ad loc. (Pirkei Avos in the Light of Chassidus by Yekutiel Green) – ascent.org.il

"Great is the Torah, for it gives life to those who practice it" (Avos 6:7) "Those who practice it" refers to individuals who observe the mitzvot. By saying "great is the Torah", the beraisa emphasizes that Torah study surpasses observance of the mitzvot. And it explains why: "for it gives life". It is possible that even a person who is fastidious in observing mitzvot will do so listlessly. Torah study inspires an understanding of the bond with G-d that is established through the observance of mitzvot, and thus infuses one's observance with energy and vitality. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe, In the Paths of Our Fathers by Eliyahu Tauger) - ibid

Eighteen Rubles

To the town of Schedrin there arrived a messenger, sent by the leading rabbis of the day, to raise money for a worthy cause. A meeting was convened by the town's elders to discuss how to aid the guest in his holy mission.

At the meeting, it was suggested that the messenger be accompanied in his door-to-door visits by a respectable member of the community. This way, those who might give grudgingly to a stranger would be more generous in the presence of someone they knew and respected.

All faces naturally turned to Reb Peretz the mill-owner, who neatly fitted the bill: learned, pious and wealthy, he was by far the most prestigious burgher in the room.

Reb Peretz, however, was not quite as enthusiastic. "Listen," he finally said, "I was thinking: how much will we collect by knocking on the door of every small-time shopkeeper and wagon-driver? I know this town. I estimate that we will raise, at most, eighteen silver rubles. I'll tell you what--I'm ready to contribute the eighteen rubles myself, if you'll exempt me from this 'honor'..."

Present at the meeting was the town's rabbi, the mashpia Rabbi Shaul DovBer Zislin. At this point, Rabbi Shaul DovBer interjected. "Reb Peretz," he said, "you just explained something that was puzzling me all evening. I was wondering: why was this meeting called? Surely the dear Jews of Schedrin are charitable souls, who will give whatever they can to a worthy cause. Why didn't the messenger simply go about his rounds, raising the money?"

"I'll tell you why. When our friend came to town, the Yetzer Harah ('evil inclination') was frantic. Hundreds of mitzvot were about to be performed in Schedrin! Never mind the eighteen rubles that will be raised---considering the sums of money that the Yetzer Harah deals with, this is a mere pittance. But the mitzvot! Yankel the water-carrier, Shebsel the innkeeper, Mina the laundress, and hundreds of others, are going to joyfully give their hard-earned pennies to aid their brethren in distress. What work awaited the Yetzer Harah! He must now finagle his way into the heart of each of Schedrin's precious Jews and seek to dampen their generosity, to convince them to reduce their contribution or to refuse the messenger altogether, G-d forbid.

"Then the Yetzer Harah had an idea. Call a meeting! Yes---call a meeting of the Schedrin's influential householders, a meeting to aid the messenger in his holy mission. At this meeting, it will inevitably be suggested that Reb Peretz accompany the messenger to stimulate an even more generous response. Now, the Yetzer Harah's job will be much, much easier---all he has to do is to convince Reb Peretz to give the eighteen rubles himself..." Adapted from the teachings of the Rebbe by Yanki Tauber, Week in Review, Vol XIII No 42 Pinchas 5762) - meaningfullife.com

To the more numerous you shall increase their inheritance, and to the fewer you shall lessen their inheritance... Nevertheless the land shall be divided by lot... whether many or few (26:54-55)

The commentaries offer different approaches to explaining the apparent contradiction in these verses. Rashi says that the land was divided into twelve provinces of different size, taking into account the difference in population among the tribes. Nevertheless, the question of which province should go to which tribe was determined by lot; miraculously, the lot matched the more populous tribes with the larger provinces and the less populous ones with the smaller provinces.

Nachmanides says that the land was divided into 12 equal portions (not necessarily equal in size, since the quality of land was also taken into consideration), and the matching of provinces to tribes was done by lot. Thus each tribe received an equal share, regardless of population. The instruction that "To the more numerous you shall increase their inheritance, and to the fewer you shall lessen their inheritance" refers to the division of the land within the tribes: each tribal head divided his tribe's portion among the families of the tribe in accordance to the number of members in each family (as determined by the census taken here).

Another opinion is that the lottery determined the location of each tribe's portion but not its size, which was adjusted in accordance with the tribe's population. (Me'am Loez)

However these verses are understood, the implication is that the Torah is insisting that two different--even conflicting--dynamics be involved in the apportionment of the land: a rational division, which takes into account empirical data such as population figures and the quality of the land; a supra-rational lottery, whose workings are beyond human comprehension and control.

There is also a third factor involved: the concept of "inheritance"--a word that appears repeatedly in these verses in connection with the apportionment of the Land. Inheritance is neither "rational" nor "supra-rational." An heir is not receiving a particular portion of land by some logical criteria or by some esoteric formula, but as his "birthright"--as something that is inexorably bound to his essence, something that belongs to him by virtue of who and what he is.

Our portion in life, says the Lubavitcher Rebbe, includes all three dynamics.

There are the events and opportunities which shape our lives, giving rise to decisions and choices on how best to fulfill our purpose. One man will choose to be a Torah scholar, another will ascertain the hand of Divine Providence pointing him to the business world, while a third will interpret a G-d-given talent as directing him to become an artist. This is the "rational" means by which we receive our "portion in the land."

But then there are the circumstances and experiences that "befall" us in a seemingly random and arbitrary manner. A person will often mistake these for "chance." But these are no less the hand of Divine Providence than the rational side of life. In fact, they express a more profound involvement by G-d in our lives--an involvement that is too lofty to be captured by any logical formula, so that our earthly eyes can perceive it only as an "arbitrary" casting of lots. These are gifts that are too potent to be tapped with the conventional tools of intellect and instinct; we can only open ourselves to their possibilities.

Finally, we each have those moments in life when our "inheritance" comes to light. Moments which are not driven by our reason, nor by the transcendent forces that impact our lives, but by the very essence of who and what we are--by that deepest self that is one with its Source.

Life is the sum of these three elements. To live is to develop and optimize one's consciously understood faculties. To live is to be receptive to the mysteries of life, to learn to recognize and respond to the opportunities implicit in the most esoteric turns of fate. And to live is to be attuned to the core of truth in the core of one's soul--to one's heritage as a child of G-d. chabad.org

A practice of my father's: When travelling, even when spending months in one place, he would recite t'fil at haderech, the prayer for travellers (p. 86) daily after davening, omitting Gd's name in the conclusion. (From Rebbe's Hayom yom 19 TAMMUZ).

***Behold, I will send you Elijah the Prophet, before the coming of the great and awesome day of G-d.
And he will return the hearts of fathers to children, and the hearts of children to their fathers
— Malachi 3:23***

PARTICIPATE IN DAILY CLASSES

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Rosh Hashana (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Makos (men)
<u>Wednesday</u>	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
<u>Thursday</u>	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
<u>Daily</u>	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chassidus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

DAILY MINYONIM:

Shacharit: Mon-Fri 6:00 AM and 7:30 AM

Sunday 9:00 AM

Mincha/Maariv: 8:00 PM

SHABBOS PARSHAS PINCHAS

Candlelighting:(Los Angeles) 7:46 PM
Friday Mincha: 8:00 PM
Early Minyan: 6:30 PM

LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:27 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

- **Tanya** 8:45 AM
- **Shacharit** 9:30 AM followed by
Kiddush & Cholent
- **Pirkei Avos** 6:50 PM
- **Mincha** 7:35 PM followed by
Seuda Shlishit
- **Shabbat ends** 8:46 PM

Happy Birthday to Isaac Gershon Mintz, Yoseph Illulian & Shoshanah Isaac.

Yartzheits: Avraham Eshel - Tammuz 19 (Varda Rav-Noy's father).

GOOD SHABBOS!