



DIVREI TORAH ON THE PARSHA • BY RABBI DOV KEILSON

זכרון אבינעם

ZICHRON AVINOAM

לע"נ הבחור החשוב אבינעם ע"ה בן שמואל אהרן נ"י • IN MEMORY OF AVINOAM GROSSMAN • כ"י תשנ"ט/979

ט' אלול תשפ"ז

ONE MONTH

*Baruch shecheyanu — Thank You, Hashem, for **twenty years** of weekly divrei Torah, bli ayin hora — may Hashem bentch us to continue our avodas hakodesh, to bring His Torah and His light to as many Yidden as possible... bringing great aliyah to Avinoam's neshamah...*

*Thank you, R' Zev Bald, for planting the seed this very Shabbos (attached please find our very first edition); thank you, Mrs. Bevy Baida, for typing it each week that first year (until I learned how to type it myself, baruch Hashem), and thank you, Moshe Benoliel, for your painstaking, loyal work (and recently for Mrs. Felice Eisner's amazing editing), **without missing even one Shabbos, formatting it and sending it out to the thousands of readers (and also editing for most years; while during Parshas Pinchas 5775 I missed the week that I sat shiva for my mother a'h, he still did his job that very week...), no matter where he might have been in the world at that time.... May Hashem bentch him and his family with every berachah....***

The lesson of this weekly Torah email is that even if one says to himself, "How can I write a dvar Torah for the masses every Shabbos?" he should just do it... and Hashem will make it happen... may He continue to help us do so....

Our *parashah* starts off with the *yefas to'ar* who is taken during wartime; this non-Jewish woman cries for one month over leaving her father and mother. The Zohar brings a most fascinating idea on these words: וּבְכֹתָהּ אֶת אָבִיהָ וְאֶת אִמָּהּ יָרַח יָמֶיהָ — *and she cries over her father and her mother "a yerach" of days...* (Devarim 21:13). "Her Father" refers to Hashem; "her mother" is Klal Yisrael, and the "month" during which she cries hints to the month of Elul (as brought in the *Ohr HaChaim* as well). What is the depth behind this amazing idea?

Rav Shmuel Brazil *shlita*, in his incredible *sefer BiSha'arei HaMoadim* on Elul, explains: The particular word the Torah uses (*yerach*) is unique; what is the reason behind it? The *Levush* explains that when referring to

giving a *get*, a divorce, the Torah uses the word *yerach* for "a month." However, when the Torah speaks about marriage, it uses the *lashon* חדשה, *a new wife*, hinting to the word *chodesh*, implying that it is a "month" of newness.

This, explains Rav Brazil, is the essence of Elul and Tishrei. The *pasuk* states, סוּר מִרָע וַעֲשֵׂה טוֹב — *Remove [yourself] from evil and do good* (Tehillim 34). When returning in *teshuvah* to HaKadosh Baruch Hu, one must work on both aspects: leaving the evil behind and renewing one's commitment to Hashem in loyalty. And thus, the *avodah* of Elul is specifically to remove oneself from all the negative aspects — and that is why the month is referred to as *yerach*, because that is the way the Torah refers to being divorced and removing oneself completely from the negative. In contrast, Tishrei is the *hischadshus* of the commitment to HaKadosh Baruch Hu in every way.

That is why, Rav Brazil explains, when speaking about that great month of Tishrei, the Torah first refers to "the seventh month" and then adds the day of the month — the day on which Rosh Hashanah falls — instead of saying the day of the month first, as it usually does and then the number of the appropriate month.

This is because the Torah wanted to emphasize that this month of Tishrei is all about the *chiddush*, as this month is the month hinted at during *Kiddushin*. It is the month when one strengthens and renews his true and deep connection to Hashem Yisbarach.

So, Rav Brazil added, the shofar blasts and the tears of this month of Elul are those of סוּר מִרָע; while the shofar and tears of Tishrei represent the true inspiration to come close.

The woman in our *parashah* is crying over her negative past. The simple understanding is that the woman is crying because she misses her past; yet the *derash* is that she is crying over the past *from which she so badly wishes to remove herself* so she can finally start anew — and that is the month of Elul, which we merit to be experiencing right now.... *B'Siyata DiShmaya*.