

שער הבטחון

The Gate of Trust



חובות הלבבות

Duties of the hearts

—CHAPTER 7—

חיינו
CHAYENU

DAILY TORAH STUDY. DELIVERED.

פרק שביעי Chapter 7

DETRIMENTS TO TRUST

ובין שהשלמנו בשער הזה מה שהיה ראוי לו מן הדברים כפי השתנו, ראוי לנו עתה לְבַאֵר מפסדי הבטחון באלהים.

ואמר, כי מפסדי שלשת השערים הקודמים בספר הזה כלם מפסדים הבטחון.

ומפסדי עור, הסבלות בענין הבורא ובמדותיו הטובות, כי מי שאינו מבין רחמי הבורא על בראויו והגנתו עליהם והשגחתו ומשלו בהם ושהם קשורים באסוריו, לא ינוח לבו ולא יסמוך עליו.

ומהם סבלותו במצות הבורא יתברך, רצוני לומר תורתו אשר הזהיר בה לסמוך עליו ולבטוח בו, כמו שאמר (מלאכי ג, י) "ובחנוני נא בזאת", ואמר (ישעיה כו ד) "בטחו בה' עדי עד".

ומהם נטותו אל הסבות הקרובות אשר הוא רואה אותן, ולא ידע כי העלות כל אשר תקרבנה מהמעולל, תמעט וכלתם להועיל למעולל ולהזיקו. וכל אשר תרחקנה, יהיה כח וכלתם להועילו ולהזיקו יותר חזק ונראה.

Having completed explaining in this gate that which is fitting to explain regarding the matters of *bitachon*, according to our understanding, it is now appropriate for us to explain which matters are an impediment to a person's trust in the Almighty.

I will say that those matters which are impediments to achieving the levels explained in the three previous gates are all impediments to a person's trust in the almighty.

Other impediments to a person's trust in G-d are as follows: The foolishness that people have regarding the greatness of the Creator and His good attributes in which he conducts himself with his creations. For one who does not comprehend the Creator's compassion over his creations, his conduct with them, his supervision and rulership over them, and how they are connected to him with his chains, such a person will not be able to have peace of mind or be able to rely on him.

Another impediment to a person's trust in the Almighty is a person's ignorance regarding the Commandments of the Creator, blessed be He. I mean to say - His Torah, in which He has warned us to rely on Him and to trust in Him, as it says (in Malachi 3:10): "And test Me now in this," and as it says (in Yeshayahu 26:4): "Trust in the L-rd forever."

Another impediment to a person's trust in the Almighty, is a person's propensity to attribute his success to the immediate causes, which are apparent to him. He doesn't realize that when it comes to causes, the closer the cause is to the outcome, then the less of an ability they have to affect the outcome either positively or negatively. Conversely, the further the causes are from the outcome, the more they have the ability to affect the outcome both positively and negatively.

כמו המלך, כשהוא רוצה לענות אחר
מעבדיו, מצוה משנהו לעשות, והמשנה
מצוה השני, והשני מצוה השומר,
והשומר מצוה לפרדיוט, והפרדיוט
מצוה הנוגשים, והנוגשים מקימים
המעשה בכלים מוכנים לו.

This can be likened to a king, whom when he wishes to afflict one of his servants, will instruct his second in command to execute his will. The second in command in turn instructs the chief of Police (who is his inferior). The Chief of Police then instructs the Sergeant, while the Sergeant instructs the officer who then instructs the taskmasters. The taskmasters are the ones who actually inflict the punishment with the tools that have been prepared for it, such as the stick and the whip.

ואשר יבלתו מעוטה מבלם להקל
מצערו ולהוסרף עליו, הם הכלים, מפני
שאין להם חפץ, והנוגשים יותר יכולים
מהכלים, וכן הפרדיוט יותר מהנוגשים,
והשומר יותר מן הפרדיוט, והשני יותר
מן השומר, והמשנה יותר מהשומר,
והמלך יותר מבלם, מפני שאם ירצה
ימחל לו.

The tools are the ones which have the least power, in fact they have no power whatsoever, to either ease the servant's pain or to add to it. This is because the tools have no will or choice at all. The taskmasters have more power than the tools. Likewise, the Officer has even more power than the taskmasters. The Sergeant has more power than the officer, while the Chief of Police has even more power than the Sergeant. The Second in command has more power than the Chief of police but the king has the most power of all of them, because if he wants, he can pardon him.

וכבר נראה לך כי חלישות העלות
וחזקתם להועיל למעולל תהיינה כפי
קרבתם ורחקם ממנו. והבורא יתעלה
אשר הוא תכלית העלות ברחק מן
המעוללים, ראוי לבטוח בו ולסמוך
עליו, להזקק יבלתו על תועלתם ונזקם,
כאשר קדמנו מן הדברים.

It is already apparent to you that the ability of the various causes to affect the outcome will be according to their closeness or distance from it. Since the Creator may he be exalted is the ultimate cause of all the causes and the most distant of all causes, therefore, it is fitting to trust him and rely on him, due to His strong ability to help a person or to cause him harm as we have explained here.

THE PROGRESS OF TRUST

וּכְלָלוֹ שֶׁל דְּבַר בְּעֵינֵי הַבְּטָחוֹן, כִּי יִתְרוֹן
הַבְּטָחוֹן מִהַבּוֹטָחִים בְּאֱלֹהִים כִּפִּי יִתְרוֹן
יְדִיעַתָם אוֹתוֹ, וְאִמּוֹנַתָם בְּהַגָּנָתוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם
וְרַב הַשְּׂגָחָתוֹ עַל מוֹבְתָם.

The general rule regarding the matter of trust in the Almighty, is that the level of trust of people who trust in the almighty have is based on the level of their understanding of G-d's greatness, and on the level of their belief in His protection over them and in His constant care for their good.

וְהִנֵּה הַיֶּלֶד בְּתַחֲלַת עֵינָיו בּוֹטֵחַ עַל
שְׂדֵי אִמּוֹ, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (תהלים כב, י)
"מִבְּטִיחִי עַל שְׂדֵי אִמִּי."

When a child is first born he relies solely on his mother's breasts as it says (in Tehillim 22:10): "You made me secure on my mother's breast."

וּכְאֲשֶׁר תַּחֲזֹק הַכֶּרֶתוֹ, מִשִּׁיב בְּטָחוֹנוֹ עַל
אִמּוֹ לְרַב הַשְּׂגָחָתָהּ עֲלָיו, כְּמוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר
(תהלים קלא, ב) "אִם לֹא שְׂוִיתִי
וְדוֹמְמִיתִי נַפְשִׁי כְּגֹמֵל עָלַי אִמּוֹ כְּגֹמֵל עָלַי
נַפְשִׁי."

When the child grows up a little and his understanding develops he then turns to rely on his mother herself due to the great care she has for him, as it says (in Tehillim 131:2): "I swear that I calmed and quieted my soul like a suckling on its mother; like a suckling was my soul with me."

וּכְשֶׁתַּחֲזֹק הַכֶּרֶתוֹ עוֹד וְרוֹאֶה כִּי הַנְּהַגָּת
אִמּוֹ אֵל אָבִיו, מִשִּׁיב בְּטָחוֹנוֹ אֲלָיו
לְמַעַלְת הַגָּנָתוֹ עָלָיו.

When his understanding develops even more and he sees how his mother's conduct with him is dependent on his father, he then turns to rely on his father due to the fact that he protects him.

וּכְאֲשֶׁר יִחַזַּק גּוּפוֹ וְתַתְּכֵן לוֹ תַּחְבּוּלָה
בְּמַחֲרָתוֹ כְּמִלְאָכָה אוֹ סְחוּרָה וְהַדּוּמָה
לָהֶם, מִשִּׁיב בְּטָחוֹנוֹ אֶל כּחוֹ וְתַחְבּוּלָתוֹ,
מִפְּנֵי סְכָלוֹתוֹ בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר קָדַם בְּמוֹבְת
הַנְּהַגָּת הָאֱלֹהִים.

When his body becomes stronger and it becomes feasible for him to engage in the means of livelihood, such as work or commerce and the like, he will then turn to rely on his own strength, and his schemes. He relies on himself instead of G-d, because of his lack of understanding that all the good that he received till now was in truth from the goodness of the conduct of the Almighty toward him.

ואמרו על אחד מן החסידים, שהיה לו שכן סופר מהיר והיה מתפרנס משכר ספרותו. אמר לו יום אחד: היאך ענייך, אמר לו: בטוב, בעוד ידי שלמה. ולערב היום ההוא נגדעה ידו, ולא כתב בה שאר ימיו, והיה זה ענשו מהאל לתברך על אשר בטח על ידו.

They said regarding one of the pious people, that he had a neighbor who was a swift scribe who would make his livelihood from the payment that he received for his writing. One day the pious person asked his neighbor: "How are things? He answered: "My situation is good as long as my hand is in good shape." That very evening his hand got crushed and he was not able to write for the rest of his life. This was a punishment from the Almighty, blessed be He, for relying on his hand to provide for his livelihood.

ואם יתכן לו טרפו על ידי זולתו מן הבכירות, ישיב בטחונו אליהם ותנוח נפשו עליהם.

If he will obtain his livelihood from other people he will then turn to rely on them, and he will rest his mind on them and their capability to help him.

וכשתתחזק הכרתו ויראה חסרונם וצרכם אל הבורא ותברך, ישיב בטחונו אליו, ויסמוך עליו בענינים שאין לו יכולת בהם ולא יוכל להמלט מהמסר בהם אל גזרת הבורא,

When his understanding develops and he will see those people's deficiencies, i.e., he sees the deficiency in humans alone, and notice how they too are in need of the Creator's kindness, he will then turn to rely on Him, but at first he will only rely on Him for those matters that are beyond his control, and about which he has no other choice other than to hand them over to the Creator and to put his trust in Him regarding them.

כמו ירדת הגשמים על הזריעה, והליכת הים, והליכת המדברות מאין מים, ובבוא שטף, ובנפול הדבר בחיים, והדומה לזה מן הענינים אשר אין בהם לאדם שום תחבולה בשום פנים, כמו שנאמר (ירמיה ב, כז) "ובעת רעתם יאמרו קומה והושיענו".

Such as, he relies on the Creator for the rain to come at the time of sowing, and when he goes on a trip at sea and when he goes in the desert where there is no water, or when a flood comes, or there is a plague of pestilence and for similar matters regarding which a person has no means whatsoever with which to save himself from them. As it says (in Yirmiyahu 2:27): "And at the time of their misfortune they say, "Arise and save us."

ואם תחזק הכרתו באלהים עוד יבטח
בו גם בן כמה שייתכן לו בו קצת
תחבולה, כמו הבאת המרר בסבות
המסכנות והמלאכות המונעות את
הגופים, ויניחן לבטחונו באלהים
שימריהו כמה שיהיה קל להתעסק בו
יותר מהן.

ואם תחזק הכרתו באלהים יותר, ישיב
בטחונו אליו בכל הסבות, הקשה מהן
והקלה, ויבון בהתעסקו בהן לעבודת
האלהים ולשמור מצותיו.

וכאשר תחזק הכרתו יותר מזה בחמלת
הבורא על בראיו, ורצה כמה שיהיה
מגורת האלהים לו בלבד ובלשונו
ובגראתו ובנסתרו.

וישמח בכל אשר עשה לו האלהים
ממות וחיים וריש ועשר ובריאות וחלי,
לא יסורף לזולת מה שבהר לו האלהים,
ולא ירצה אלא מה שרצה לו, ונמסר אל
האלהים, ומשליך נפשו וגופו אל דינו.

ולא יגביר ענין על ענין, ולא יבחר זולת
מה שהוא בו מעניני עולמו, כמו שאמר
אחד מן הבוטחים: לא השכמתי מעולם
בענין והתאויתי לזולתו.

If his understanding of the Almighty develops more, then he will rely on him even about those matters regarding which it is possible for him to help himself through his own efforts. For example, if it is possible for him to obtain his sustenance through dangerous means or with strenuous work which tires out a person's body, he will not engage in those means, due to his trust in the Almighty that he will sustain him through those means which are easier for him to engage in.

If his understanding of the Almighty develops even more, then he will turn to rely on him regarding all the means, both the difficult ones as well as the easier ones. When engaging in them he will have the intention that he is doing so as part of his service of the Almighty and so as to observe His commandments.

If his understanding of the Almighty develops even more and he will understand the great compassion that the Creator has over his creations, then he will willfully consent with his heart and mind to all that which Almighty has decreed for him, both in public and in private.

He will rejoice with everything that the Almighty has done to him, whether it be the death of his relatives, or that they are alive, be it poverty or wealth, health or illness. He will not desire anything other than that which the Almighty has chosen for him, and he will only want what G-d wants for him. He will give himself over to the Almighty and accept upon his soul and his body his judgement.

He will not think that a certain means of obtaining his needs is more effective than another. As a result of this he will not choose to busy himself with anything other than that which he is already engaging in. As one person who had *Bitachon* said: I never decided to do one thing, and in my heart desired to engage in something else.

וְכַאֲשֶׁר תִּחְזַק הַפֶּרֶתוֹ בְּאֱלֹהִים יוֹתֵר
 מְזִדָּה, וְיֵדַע הֶעֱנִין הַמִּבְּרָא אֵלָיו בְּבְרִיאָתוֹ
 וַיֵּצִיאָתוֹ אֶל הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה הַפְּלֵא, וַיִּכְפֹּר
 מֵעֲלַת הָעוֹלָם הָאֲחֵר הַקָּיָם, יִמָּאֵם
 בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וּבְסִבּוֹתָיו, וַיִּמְסַר בְּמַחְשָׁבָתוֹ
 וּבְנַפְשׁוֹ וּגּוּפוֹ אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים יִתְבָּרַךְ,
 וַיִּשְׁתַּעֲשַׂע בְּזִכְרוֹ בְּבְרִידוֹת, וַיִּשְׁתַּוָּמֵם
 מִבְּלִתֵי הַמַּחְשָׁבָה בְּגִדְלָתוֹ.

When his understanding of the Almighty develops even more, and he will realize the purpose of his creation, and of his coming out into this fleeting world, and he will recognize the greatness of the world to come which is eternal, then he will despise this world and all the worldly means through which one obtains its pleasures. He will give himself over to the Almighty blessed be with his thought, his soul and body. When he is alone and undisturbed by other people he will take pleasure when remembering his Creator. He will feel desolate when he will not think about His greatness.

וְאִם יִהְיֶה בְּמִקְהֵלוֹת, לֹא יִתְאַוֶּה כִּי אִם
 לְרְצוֹנוֹ, וְלֹא יִכְסּוֹף כִּי אִם לְפָנֵי עֵתוֹ,
 וְתִמְרִידָהוּ שְׂמִיחָתוֹ בְּאִהְבָתוֹ מִשְׂמִיחַת
 אֲנָשֵׁי הָעוֹלָם בְּעוֹלָם, וְשְׂמִיחַת אֲנָשֵׁי
 הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

If he will be among people, his only desire will be to please his Creator by fulfilling his will, and he will long for nothing other than to encounter G-d. He will be so occupied with the joy of the love of G-d that it will stop him from rejoicing with the other people who rejoice with the matters of this world. Nor will he be able to rejoice with the joy that the people of the world to come rejoice in the world to come.

וְזֹאת הָעֲלִיוֹנָה שְׂבִמְדֵרְגוֹת הַבוֹטְחִים
 מִהַנְּבִיאִים וְחַסִּידִים וְסִגְלַת הָאֱלֹהִים
 הַזּוֹכִיבִים, וְהוּא מֵה שְׂאֵמֶר הַפְּתוּב (ישעיה
 כו, ח) "אֵף אֶרֶץ מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ ה' קוֹיֵנוּךָ,
 לְשִׁמְךָ וּלְזִכְרֶךָ תֵּאֵוֹת נַפְשִׁי", וְאֵמֶר
 (תהלים מב, ג) "צְמָאָה נַפְשִׁי לְאֱלֹהִים,
 לְאֵל חַי".

This is the highest level of all the different levels that exist among those who trust in G-d which is the level of the prophets, pious ones and special individuals with pure hearts who were on this level. This is what Scripture refers to when it says (in Yeshayahu 26:8): "Even in the path of Your judgment, O G-d do we yearn for You, the soul's desire is for Your name and remembrance," and as it says (in Tehilim 42:3): "My soul thirst for G-d, the living G-d."

אֵלֶּה עֶשֶׂר מְדֵרְגוֹת הַבְּטָחוֹן, אֲשֶׁר לֹא
 יִמְלֹט בּוֹטֵחַ מֵאַחַת מֵהֵנָּה.

These are the ten levels of *bitachon* which every person who trusts will find himself in one of these levels.

ומצאנו ענין הבטחון בלשון הקדוש
מליצים בעדו בעשר מלות כנגד עשר
מדרגות האלה, והן: מבטח, ומשען,
ותקנה, ומחסה, ותוחלת, וחבוי,
וסמיכה, ושבר, ומסעד, וכסל.

האלהים ישימנו מן הבוטחים עליו,
הנמסרים לדינו בנראה ובנסתר,
ברחמינו, אמן.

We find that for the matter of bitachon ten different words in the Holy language of Scripture are used for it which corresponds to these ten levels. They are: Mivtach (trust), Mishan (support), tochelet (waiting), Chikui (expecting) Semicha (reliance) sever (resting), misad (confidence) and chesel (assurance).

May G-d, in his mercy place us to be among those who trust in him and give themselves over to his judgement both in public and in private. Amen.

The gate of trust has been completed to the G-d who is the last and the first.