

Kinder Torah®

Parashas Ki Seitzei

בס"ד

Kambash

“Would you like to be our Shabbos guest, Mr. Green?”

“Thank you so much for the invitation, Rabbi Kambash. It would be my pleasure to come to your beautiful home. I always enjoy your Shabbos table immensely. Everything and everyone in your home is so serene. Everybody’s face has a happy relaxed expression. No voice is ever raised. I never sensed even a trace of anger; only pleasantness, tranquility, and calm. The food is always delicious, the accommodations are tip-top. Your home is a veritable fountain of peace and blessing. It is a privilege to join you!”

“Why thank you so much, Mr. Green. My parents’ home was also serene, as was my grandparents. This has been a trait in our family for generations. In fact, this is the source of our family name, ‘Kambash’.”

“What do you mean, Rabbi?”

“‘Kambash’ is an acronym for the Hebrew letters, ‘chof’, ‘mem’, ‘beis’ ‘shin’. They are the first letters of the words, ‘keli machzik bracha shalom’ – the vessel which holds blessing is peace. Our family name is based upon the famous saying of our Sages, ‘The Holy One Blessed Be He found no other vessel that can hold bracha for Klal Yisrael other than shalom’.¹ We have kept shalom in our family and have merited much heavenly bracha.”



“How great is shalom, for the conclusion of the entire tefillah (Amidah prayer) is none other than shalom.”² Our Sages are referring to the last blessing of the Amidah – “Sim shalom” – grant peace. Let us look into the sublime importance of this request. The sefer Yesod Vi’shoresh Ho’avodah declares that it is fitting for a person to contemplate the great attributes of the blessing of shalom. He then cites a myriad of examples. Bircas Kohanim concludes with shalom. The good tidings that the Holy One gave to Avraham Avinu were shalom, as the verse states, “You shall come to your ancestors in peace” (Bereshis 15:15). The only request that Yaakov Avinu had from the Holy One was shalom, as the verse states, “And I return in peace to my father’s house” (Bereshis 28:21). The only praise that the Holy One gave Aharon was shalom, as the verse states, “My covenant was with him – life and peace” (Malachi 2:5). He only made a covenant with Pinchas for shalom, as the verse states, “Behold, I

give him My covenant of peace” (Bamidbar 25:12). The Beis HaMikdash was inaugurated with shalom, as the verse states, “May there be peace within your walls, serenity within your palaces” (Tehillim 122:7). The announcement of Klal Yisrael as Hashem’s nation is only with shalom, as the verse states, “For the sake of My brethren and My comrades, I shall speak of peace in your midst” (Tehillim 122:8). The portion that tsaddikim will receive in the next world is proclaimed with shalom, as the verse states, “But the humble shall inherit the earth, and delight in abundant peace” (Tehillim 37:11). These all hint to the upper world, which is called shalom. Therefore, there is no other mitzvah that a person is compelled to pursue like shalom, as the verse states, “Seek peace and pursue it” (Tehillim 34:15). When a person pursues peace here in this lower world, it arouses the upper world of shalom to bestow blessing upon all the worlds.

The sefer Yaaros Devash probes the depths of the subject. Shalom is “nechmad” (a pleasing thing). Its perfect attainment is a state of complete unity in Klal Yisrael. The prayer for shalom is that there should be no machlokes (strife), jealousy, hatred, or competition in our nation. Rather all should be loving, valuing, and uniting each other in ultimate unity. All of Klal Yisrael should be one nefesh (soul). The purpose of the tefillah “sim shalom” should be to fulfill, “You shall love your fellow as yourself”³ which is the principle of the entire Torah. Pray that you should have no anger, rather be humble to all, which is the madrayga (spiritual level) of shalom. For where anger is found, there is no shalom.

And so we request, “Sim shalom” – please grant us shalom of the body, the home, the state, and the possessions from all mishaps, tragedies, and strife. “Tovah” – what is good for the perfection of each and every person. “U’vracha” – bestow upon us an abundance of success. “Chen” – May we find favor in Your eyes which in turn will lead to us finding favor in the eyes of all who see us. “Vi’chesed” – grant our requests even though we are not fitting. “Vi’rachamim” – be merciful upon us and do not punish us as we deserve. “Aleinu vi’al kol Yisrael amecha” – upon us and all of Klal Yisrael. “Borcheinu Avinu” – Since You are our Father and truly love us, grant us success.⁴ “Kulanu kiechad b’ohr ponecha” – Klal Yisrael merits the beneficence of the light of

Hashem’s countenance when there is no divisiveness among them, as was at Har Sinai “like one man with one heart”. The light of Hashem’s countenance is the revelation of love and pleasure for the beloved (Klal Yisrael) that is expressed on His face which is happy and glowing (so to speak). “Ki b’ohr ponecha nosato lonu Hashem Elokeinu Toras chaim” – As a result of shalom, Hashem gave us the Torah with the beneficence of His countenance.⁵ “Torah chaim” – the Torah guides us how to live our lives. “Vi’ahavas chessed” – the Torah teaches us how to love and perform chessed, for it is entirely chessed.⁶ Hashem is not content if we merely act kindly toward each other. He wants us to love kindness. What someone loves to do is never a chore.⁶ “U’tsedaka” – reward for mitzvos in Olam Haba, “u’vracha” – success in Olam Haze, “vi’rachamim” – special mercy, “vi’chaim” – long life, “vi’shalom” – serenity to the body and soul.⁴ “And may it be good in Your eyes to bless Your people Israel at all times and at every moment with your peace.” The Elders fixed this bracha in accordance with what the malachim said, “Blessed are You Hashem, Who blesses His nation Israel with shalom.” This was said at the time when Klal Yisrael entered the land and fulfilled the verse, “And I will provide peace in the land” (Vayikra 26:6).⁷

Kinderlach . . .

Who wants blessing? Everyone! Who does not hope for health, children, prosperity, and achieving his spiritual potential? Our Sages point the way to receiving bracha – love shalom, pursue shalom, and pray for shalom. “Rebbe Shimon ben Chalafta said, ‘The Holy One Blessed Be He found no other vessel that can hold bracha for Klal Yisrael other than shalom as the verse states, “Hashem will give might to His nation, Hashem will bless His nation with peace”’ (Tehillim 29:11).¹ This is the subject of the final blessing of the Amidah. Pray for shalom, kinderlach. Make shalom with family members, classmates, neighbors, and friends. Guard shalom, as you would a valuable gem, and it will bring you blessing your entire life.

¹ Mishna Uktzen 3:12

² Bamidbar Rabba 11:7

³ Vayikra 19:18

⁴ Avodas HaTefillah

⁵ Kavannas HaLev

⁶ Chofetz Chaim

⁷ Levush