

# Heaven & Earth

There is a connection in store,  
Between Pirkei Avos chapter four,  
And Parshas Behar which we read this week,  
And Lag B'omer, when the life of the Rashbi reached its peak.

The common denominator that we find,  
Is that in each category there are two opposites to bind.  
In chapter 4, in the thirteenth Mishna,  
The Rashbi discusses the value of Torah study and doing a Mitzvah.

He says: "There are crowns three,  
The crown of Torah, the crown of Kehuna, and the crown of royalty.  
But the crown of a good name above the rest does rise,"  
To someone who does Mitzvos, a good name applies.

Why would the Rashbi say this, is our question,  
If learning Torah was his occupation.  
If he thought that doing Mitzvos was greater,  
Then to study Torah his entire life, why did he endeavor?

Torah and Mitzvos are opposites seemingly,  
Because Torah study is all about me,  
But when I fulfill a Mitzvah obligation,  
The other person I first take into consideration.

Another puzzling thing comes to mind,  
A contradiction between the Parsha's name and its content we find.  
The first thing that it speaks about in this Parsha,  
Is the laws of not working the land in a year of Shemita.

The Torah addresses a person whose faith isn't stable,  
He is concerned about how he will have food to put on his table.  
Hashem says don't worry  
In the sixth year you'll be blessed with plenty!

The Parsha continues to go downhill,  
It speaks of a Jew who goes against Hashem's will.  
Until to a gentile family he is sold,  
Not to follow his master's way in the Torah he is told.

On the other hand this whole discussion,  
Is found in the Behar Torah portion.  
Behar means at the mountain, referring to Sinai,  
When the Jews were on a level so high.

On Lag B'omer another set of opposites we see,  
It is the day that the Rashbi passed away yet we are meant to be happy.  
In his personal life for 12 years in a cave he was hidden,  
Yet on his death bed the greatest Torah secrets he taught his Talmidim.

Our job is to unite,  
The opposites that are in sight!  
Specifically in a Parsha where it speaks about a Jew falling so low,  
From the name of the Parsha we get the power to rise and grow!

The purpose of Giving the Torah wasn't to be divorced from nature,  
On the contrary, we leave the desert and the land we enter,  
From Sinai we get the power,  
To overcome the concealment of Hashem every hour.

Torah and Mitzvos work together,  
 You can't have one without the other.  
 A person must realize before he starts learning,  
 That the quality of his learning depends on his doing!

Rashbi holds that study alone is not enough and Mitzvos we must do.  
 Because Teshuvah and good deeds are the purpose of Torah, it is true,  
 And if a person doesn't study with this intent,  
 Then the quality of his Torah is deficient.

To complete the Torah learning is a Mitzvah's goal,  
 But it doesn't have a higher role.  
 So why is the crown of a good name above the rest,  
 Between Torah and Mitzvos is there a contest?

To create a dwelling place, all our ways of serving Hashem are necessary,  
 Because "a prisoner can not set himself free."  
 If work that entails being invested in the world, we performed only,  
 Then to uplift the world we wouldn't have the ability.

The Torah scholars have a mission,  
 To nurture a Jew's ambition,  
 Who only has time for a morning and evening Torah study session,  
 To emulate the learning of a person who has no other occupation.

To pull himself away from learning to help a Jew isn't easy,  
 Especially if he is immersed in Torah study,  
 Therefore he must know before he does start,  
 That his aim is to instill a love for Torah in every Jew's heart.

However we need an explanation,  
 How can we have such an expectation,  
 From a person who is immersed in the spiritual,  
 To involve himself with a person who is occupied with the physical?

Ratzo (escaping the world) and Shov (being in the world) are only opposite,  
 When we focus on a created being's limit.  
 But when a Jew rises above and has Bittul with no personal gain,  
 Then since he is fulfilling Hashem's will, his inner state is the same.

In a cave after 12 years of hiding,  
 The Rashbi came out and saw people plowing and planting.  
 Whatever he and his son gazed at, burned,  
 For another year to the cave he returned.

After the thirteenth year, with the world he was able to deal,  
 Wherever he directed his gaze he was able to heal.  
 He relinquished any personal ambition,  
 His entire being was dedicated to fulfilling Hashem's mission.

Rabbi Shimon personified this fusion,  
 He was involved in deep spiritual exploration,  
 While at the same time he had a tangible impact on the world around  
 him,  
 On his deathbed this theme reached its full expression.

The deepest mystical secrets that the other sages did conceal,  
 To his students, Rabbi Shimon did reveal.  
 He urged them to place the crown of a good name higher,  
 Use the crown of Torah so that the world you can inspire!

Once you achieve the crown of Torah don't stop,  
 Put the crown of a good name on top.  
 Put aside your ego and might,  
 Focus on making Hashem's world bright!

