

# דרכים בפרשה האזינו

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## הצור תמים פעלו כי כל-דרכיו משפט א-ל אמונה ואין עול צדיק וישר הוא. וגו'. כי חלק ה' עמו יעקב חבל נחלתו

*The Rock!—perfect is His work, for all His paths are justice; a God of faith without iniquity, righteous and fair is He... For HaShem's portion is His people; Yaakov is the measure/lot of His inheritance.*

*For HaShem's portion is His people; Yaakov is the measure/lot of His inheritance.* The word חבל-measure literally is a rope. Ropes were used to measure a lot of land, so the word *chevel* became synonymous with measuring and lots (Ibn Ezra). Rashi points out that *chevel* is used because a rope is twisted from many strands, thus stronger than any of the individual strands. Therefore, Yaakov Avinu is singled out because he combined the strengths of Avraham and Yitzchak together with his own.

We can offer another idea based on the word *chevel/rope*. Upon taking a rope and giving it a shake, one notices that a ripple effect is created. The action of shaking the rope causes a reaction in that the rest of the rope will move as well. A basic law of physics states that for every action put forth, there is an equal and opposite reaction. The stronger one pulls back the string on a bow and arrow, the further the arrow will be projected.

הוא -צדיק וישר הוא The Torah teaches us that the ways of HaShem are perfect and just. Throughout the Torah we find that the action of observing the Torah and mitzvos properly, will bring about a reaction from HaShem of *bracha* in both this world and the next; the opposite holds true as well, (this is the concept of *s'char v'onesh/reward* and punishment).

הוא -צדיק וישר הוא *Yaakov's inheritance is a rope*, i.e. The manner in which HaShem deals with His children is like a rope; the action/reaction principle.

Rav Chaim Volozhiner writes in his magnum opus, *Nefesh HaChaim (shaar 2 "haga'a")*, that one should never think that our actions down here in this world are insignificant and carry no ramifications. On the contrary! The Mishna in Avos teaches: דע מה למעלה - *know what is above you*. Homiletically, Rav Chaim explained that, *Da-* one must know that, *mah I'maala-*

that which occurs upstairs, is in fact, *mimcha*-from you. Our actions down below create a new reality above. This is like the rope that our possuk mentioned. We give it a *shlep* down below and the rope ripples high above.

Similarly, the *heilige* Baal Shem Tov explained the possuk in Tehillim (121) ה' צלך - *Hashem is your shadow* as describing our relationship with Hashem. This means that the way we act to each other, is the way Hashem will act to us. Whatever we do, Hashem – as our shadow – will do likewise.

On a related note, we are now standing right before the great day of judgement, Yom Kippur, in which we will recite numerous times *ויאמר ה' סלחתי כדבריך* - *And HaShem said, "I have forgiven according to your words."* This is the possuk that Hakadosh Baruch Hu told Moshe Rabbeinu at the climax of his appeal for forgiveness on behalf of Klal Yisroel. This possuk bears such great importance that it is set right at the beginning of the Yom Kippur davening. In essence, what we are saying is that just as HaShem forgave Klal Yisroel then, we hope that He will forgive us this Yom Kippur as well.

Let us think back for a moment to a time when we were children and in shul right before Yom Kippur. We would run over to our friends and with a half-smile, we would say, "are you *moichel* me?" And they would respond, "sure". Then we would run to the next friend and do the same, perhaps, not really even thinking about why we may be asking for mechila. If we are being honest with ourselves, we may wonder, "How much is that forgiveness really worth?" I am not claiming that it is worthless, but my assumption is that this would not be enough in a scenario in which true and proper mechilla was warranted. Perhaps we can say that the mechilla is worth as much as the thought that went into the request.

Rav Boruch of Mezhibizh explains *ויאמר ה' סלחתי כדבריך* - *And HaShem said, "I have forgiven according to your words."* **According to your words-** if our request (to HaShem) is a sincere request, the response will be a sincere response. However, if our entire approach is lackadaisical and insincere, the response will be **"according to your words"**.

הוא -צדיק וישר הוא The manner in which HaShem deals with His children is like a rope; the action/reaction principle. **It is up to us to set up the manner in which we want HaShem to respond.**

**Good Shabbos and a gmar chasima tova,**

**מרדכי אפּעל**