



GROWTH

At The SHABBAT TABLE

PARSHAT BECHUKOTAI

Security

"If you follow My laws and faithfully observe My commandments... you will dwell securely in your land"
(Vayikra 26: 3,5).

Lashon HaKodesh – the (ancient) Hebrew language – is inherently unique. It is the language through which G-d created the universe, and every word is imbued with timeless importance and has significant associations to the nouns/verbs/adjectives that they represent.

Interestingly, the word in Hebrew for living "securely" is "לבטח," which is the root of the word בטחון / *bitachon* – trust in Hashem. The message here is powerful. Many people think that having *bitachon* is a "nice thing," an added bonus to one's repertoire of mitzvot. This fails to display *bitachon* for what it truly is. Placing one's trust in G-d is a necessity for a good life – without it, a person is prey to the monstrous predators of stress, anxiety, and challenges that come with life. Everyone wants to dwell securely, but having that amazing life is virtually impossible without developing one's personal *bitachon* in Hashem, which is a key mission in our entire existence.

Refuah Sheleimah, b'toch she'ar cholei Yisrael:

Ariel Ben Frida Frida Bat Yaffa Chana Bat Malka
Miriam Bat Bakol Heleni Orna Bat Chen Chana
Rahamim Ben Shifra Tzvi Eliezer Ben Gila Malka
Yitzchak Ben Naama Eloar Michael Ben Shiran

Le'iluy Nishmat: Abbo Ben Tova

*"The comeback is always stronger
than the setback."* (Meaningful Minute)

The Bumper Sticker

R' Shlomo Farhi shared a poignant story. *There was a fellow who was driving across the border from Israel into Jordan. When stopped for a security check, he presented his ID and work papers. Everything seemed to be alright, and as they were about to allow the Arab driver to proceed, the captain suddenly called to halt. "Sir," exclaimed the captain. "Please show me the registration of your vehicle." He yanked the guy out of the car for further examination, and as it turned out, the car was stolen. The troop was astonished; how did the captain know to single out this car? He explained to them that when he noticed them checking the Arab's papers, he saw a bumper sticker in the back of the car that said, "Ein Od Milvado" [there is no power other than G-d]. "I never saw an Arab driving a car with the slogan 'Ein Od Milvado,' so I figured it would be worthwhile to check."*

They returned the car after tracking down the thankful owner. When the owner came to retrieve it, he was visibly staggered, shaking his head. The captain inquired if everything was alright, to which the car-owner stammered. "I can't believe it... I can't believe it... I can't believe it..." Finally, after a few moments, he explained: "The other day, I was driving my car and saw a few hitchhikers – yeshiva boys. I figured I'd help them get to where they needed to go – it turned out they wanted to get to a certain class given on the topic of emuna. As I was driving them, they invited me to come with them to what they described as an amazing lecture, trying to convince me throughout the entire ride to attend. I wasn't really interested, and told them that I was busy. Finally giving in, one of the boys said to me, 'Since you can't come, at the very least, take this.' He was holding a bumper sticker that said 'Ein Od Milvado.' He told me, 'Every time you see this on your car, you'll remember that everything is in G-d's control, and he'll protect you and anyone you ever pick up for a trip. Please, accept this as a thank-you gift for taking us in your car.' I didn't really give it much thought, and they slapped it on the back of my car after I dropped them off at the shiur. Then, not too long after, the car got stolen! The first thing I did was track down the rabbi giving that emuna-shiur. I walked right in, and I was fuming with anger. I approached the rabbi and told him that I brought these boys to his class on emuna, and they put this bumper sticker on the back of my car, telling me that there's no one but G-d. 'Did it help me?' I retorted. 'Did it protect my car? The car got stolen! The only car that ever got stolen from me was this one, with the Ein Od Milvado sticker!' The rabbi told me that my story wasn't over just yet, and to wait and see what would yet transpire." The captain was blown away. The car-owner was still flabbergasted: "And now, you're telling me that this was how you saved my car, through the Ein Od Milvado sticker..."

In this week's Parsha, the Torah warns against "following Hashem casually" [בקר]. The Hebrew root word, קר, can also be taken to mean "happenstance" or "coincidental," as is Amalek's ideology of the world not being orchestrated by its Creator (see Devarim 25:18). Jewish wisdom teaches us that there is Divine personal providence in each of our lives, down to the smallest detail. The pasuk can be understood as teaching the immense importance of seeing Hashem in everything and living with that connection. Don't ever feel overlooked by G-d, because it's never true. Whether or not your car is decorated with stickers or magnets, let us all try raising this awareness that there really is *Ein Od Milvado*, which liberates a person from a miserable, cold [קר], and lonely existence and blesses him with a life full of meaning and purpose.