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מיט 2 חלקים



טיב התבלין

ל ידי התבוננות וידיעה זו עכשיו, תהיו מוכנים לזה אחר כך כשתצאו משם.

בַּמִּדְבָּר ט"ו מ"א, "אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֵהוֹיֹת לָכֶם

הוא היזה אומר

Mazel Tov to Ashley & Bashi Anisfeld and Shaya & Tzippy Friedman on the Aufruf and upcoming marriage of their children, **Daniel & Yitty**. May the young couple build a bayis ne'eman b'Yisroel and bring much Yiddish neches to their families and to all of Klal Yisroel.

Hearing a Sheila. On the other hand, it is not clear in the *Poskim* if one is permitted to hear a *sheila* after drinking wine and deciding it later when the wine wears off. Even though his final decision is being rendered when he is sober, it still might be problematic, because he might not have caught all the subtle details of the question.

Mazel Tov to the Davis (Chicago) and Hoffman (Monsey) families on the engagement of their children, Nechama and Tzvi, and to the Steinberg, Davis, Hoffman & Blonder Grandparents. May they be zoche to build a בית צאנז לשם that will be a לישם for the family and the entire Klal Yisroel!

תהא נשמתה צרורה

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה הִנֵּה אֲנִי יוֹצֵא מִמֶּךָּ וְהֶעֱתַרְתִּי אֵל ה' וְכִי הָעָרֹב מִפְּרֹעָה מַעֲבִידוּ וּמַעֲבִי וכו' (ח-ה)

Pharaoh asked Moshe to pray to G-d to remove the frogs. *Moshe Rabbeinu* prayed and the frogs went away. The same thing happened with the plague of wild animals. Pharaoh suffered and begged Moshe and Aharon. They *davened* to *Hashem* and the wild animals left. Likewise, with the hail and the locust. Pharaoh begs Moshe to *daven* for him, Moshe *davens*, the hail stops, and the locust leave. Why was it necessary that every single time, Pharaoh would ask him to pray, Moshe would *daven*, and only then the plagues would cease? The answer, says **R' Yeruchem Levovitz זי"ל** (*Mir Mashgiach*) is that this narration teaches us something very fundamental about life: The way to obtain things in this world is to pray for them. This is the ONLY way to achieve things in this world. Without prayer, not even Moshe could have prevailed.

A powerful story told about the holy *Rebbe*, **R' Yisroel Baal Shem Tov זי"ל** illustrates this idea. The *avodas Hashem* of the *Baal Shem Tov* is legendary, and any *mitzvah* he did was on the highest possible spiritual level. On one occasion, he asked for special wine that was made only in the far-away province of Bessarabia. This wine had special deep and latent potency and he felt it was necessary for a specific and unique *tikkun*. The *Baal Shem Tov* sent his student, **R' Dovid of Michaleyov זי"ל**, on the journey, and instructed him to oversee the production of the wine himself so that it would be kosher according to the highest standards. He was not to allow anyone else to handle this special wine.

R' Dovid traveled to the city of Tilnesht in Bessarabia, and stayed there during the months of *Elul* and *Tishrei*. He supervised every stage of the wine-making process with great care and vigilance. He purchased the highest quality grapes, watched as they were pressed, and guarded the vats as the wine fermented. He remained in Tilnesht throughout the holy days of *Tishrei*, forgoing spending them with his *Rebbe* and mentor, and safeguarded the fermenting wine with his life. The wine could not have been more kosher. After *Sukkos*, when the wine was in barrels, he finally decided that it was the precise time to leave for home. He began the journey but heavy rains turned the roads into rivers of mud, and every mile required immense effort. To make it even more difficult, there were always gentiles around, and he didn't want to take his eyes off the wine, even for a moment. Day and night, in pouring rain and howling winds, R' Dovid trudged beside the wagon, guarding its precious cargo. Finally, in a state of weary exhilaration, he arrived in Mezhibuz and parked the wagon in front of the *Baal Shem Tov's* house. With great excitement, he ran in to tell the *Rebbe* that he had succeeded in bringing the wine.

Just at that exact moment, a Russian Cossack rode by on horseback. He was an officer of the local land baron, and had been ordered to put an end to the illegal importation of vodka. He was a pompous, bombastic and pretentious man, with a huge self-inflated ego. When he saw the large barrels on the back of the wagon, he began to shout indignantly. Invoking the full measure of his legal authority, he insisted on opening all the barrels and tasting their contents. Although it would have been reasonable to stop after finding that the first barrel was wine and not vodka, the Russian was not in a reasonable mood. Whether it was the obvious dismay of the Jews or the exotic taste of the wine, the Russian was enjoying himself. Whatever the reason, the man conducted his investigation with dogged thoroughness and refused to leave until he had tasted from every single barrel. By that time, of course, the wine was entirely forbidden to Jews according to *halacha*. One can imagine the tremendous frustration that R' Dovid felt as he saw months of work being ruined at the last minute.

With tears of dismay and confusion, R' Dovid approached his *Rebbe*, the *Baal Shem Tov*, and pleaded for an explanation. “*Rebbe*, what did I do to deserve this punishment? I did everything in my power to guarantee the *kashrus* of the wine. I had no ulterior motivation and I did it all at my master's bidding. Why should such a thing happen?”

The *Baal Shem Tov* saw the pain his student's heart. “No,” he said softly, “there is one thing you did not do. You forgot to *daven*. You did not ask the *Aibishter* to help you guard the wine. And because you forgot the true Source of all protection, you were punished. As the *posuk* says, *‘If Hashem does not protect a city, the watchman's guarding is in vain.’*” (*Tehillim* 127:1)

משל למא הדבר דומה

וַיִּשְׁלַח פִּרְעֹה וַיִּקְרָא לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְאַהֲרֹן אֱלֹהִים חֲטִאתִי הִפָּעַם ה' הַצִּדִּיק וְאֲנִי וְעַמִּי הָרְשָׁעִים וְגו' (ט-ב)

משל: A simpleton once made his way to the home of a wealthy man. He had never met the man, but had heard of his reputation for immense wealth and lavish possessions. The visitor was awestruck by the magnificent home, the beautiful garden and flower-beds. A large path led to stairs laden with marble, which led to the giant reception hall. His hand trembling, he knocked on the immense, wooden door.

The door opened into an enormous room, illuminated with stunning chandeliers, with rare pieces of artwork adorning the walls and a brilliant carpet covering the floor. An aura of luxury and glory resonated throughout the house.

“I...I was wondering if perhaps I could speak with the master of the house,” asked the simpleton politely.

“I am the master of the house,” answered the man before him. “What can I do for you?” Suddenly, an arm swung around and grabbed the neck of the man standing in the hallway. Angrily, a voice asked, “Are you the master of the house?”

His eyes rolling in his head and squinting from pain, the man answered, “I am sorry, Sir. I was just joking.” The owner of the arm slowly emerged from the shadows and said, “Pay no attention to this man, he is just one of the servants. Come with me to my chamber, and we can talk there.”

וַיִּשְׁרֹן הָאֵר צַפְרָדִּיעִים וְעָלּוּ וּבָאוּ בְּכִתּוֹךְ וּבְחֹדֶר מִשְׁכַּבְךָ וּבְמִטָּתְךָ ... וּבְתַנּוּרֶיךָ וּבְמִשְׁאֲרוֹתֶיךָ (ו-ב)

The *Gemara* (פסחים גג) comments on the aforementioned *posuk*: What did Chananya, Mishoel and Azarya see to allow themselves to be thrown alive into a fiery furnace and almost be killed? They learned a “קל וחומר” from the צפרדע (frogs), saying, “If the frogs in Egypt, who were not commanded to die *Al Kiddush Hashem*, and nonetheless, they willingly jumped into the ovens of the Egyptians, then we, who are commanded *Al Kiddush Hashem*, should surely be willing to sacrifice our lives for that purpose!” This reasoning is quite difficult to understand since the *posuk* explicitly states that the frogs were commanded by *Hashem* to enter the houses, beds and ovens of the Egyptians! However, Chananya, Mishoel and Azarya had no such command to jump into the furnace. My *machshava* here is that indeed, *Hashem* commanded the frogs to spread out all over *Mitzrayim* and yet, no individual frog was ordered to forfeit its life by jumping into the fiery furnace. The frogs that chose to jump into the ovens and be burned acted on their own, so to speak, but had no command to do so. It is from these frogs that Chananya, Mishoel and Azarya deduced their “קל וחומר” and decided to jump into the furnace *Al Kiddush Hashem*, saying, that if a frog who has no deep understanding of its purpose in life for which it was created, can defy its natural instincts to live, then shouldn't we human beings who were created with a *Tzelem Elokim*, be willing to give up our lives if need be?

The *Torah* is the blueprint of our lives and the *mitzvos* are the keys with which we serve *Hashem*. While very few people today are literally asked to give up their lives for *Hashem*, we all face our own personal situations that entail great *mesiras nefesh* to perform a *mitzvah* or, conversely, to avoid doing an *aveira*, רָ. Shouldn't these frogs be a constant inspiration for us throughout our lives? On a personal note, this past *Shabbos*, my wife and I celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary. A milestone in life I wish everyone to reach. May we all draw continuous inspiration from one another, *ad meah v'esrim shana!*

DRUSH V'CHIDDUSH

וַיִּפֶּן פִּרְעֹה וַיָּבֵא אֶל בֵּיתוֹ וְלֹא שָׁת לָבוֹ גֵּם לֹאֲתָ ... (ו-בג)

After the plague of blood, the *posuk* tells us: “*Pharaoh turned away and came to his palace, he didn't take this to heart.*” The text is seemingly out of order. Shouldn't it first state that Pharaoh “*didn't take it to heart*” and then he turned away, since it was only a result that he did not pay attention to the plague that he turned towards his house?

The *Torah* is teaching us a great lesson. When we have a moment of inspiration we must not let it fade. We must hold onto the feeling and act upon it. How do we do this? By putting that inspiration into that which is tangible. An example of this is if we hear an inspiring talk on *Lashon Hara*, we can make it tangible by learning *Shmiras Halashon* daily or designating an amount of time daily where we are careful with our speech. The **Ramban** interprets the words, “וְאִם תַּעֲזֹרֶנּוּ אֶת הָאֶהָרָה עַד שֶׁתַּחֲפֹץ” to mean that when one has

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE MIDDAH OF התלהבות

The *Torah* points out: “*He is THE AHARON and HE is THE MOSHE*” that *Hashem* told to go to Pharaoh! Well, isn't this obvious? Do you know any other Aharon and Moshe that the *Torah* could be speaking about? **R' Simcha Sheps זי"ל** has a beautiful explanation. He says that the *Torah* says, (במדבר ח-ג) “יעש כן אהרן” and Rashi says that Aharon was appreciated for his enthusiasm! He lit the *menorah* the first time and the thousandth time with the same excitement and joy! He was praised for not changing (שלא שנית) and losing his passion and love for this *mitzvah*. So too with Aharon and Moshe here. Ten times they went to Pharaoh to carry out their sacred mission to free the Jews from Egypt. Each time Pharaoh changed his mind and refused to let them go. Under normal circumstances, when you do something over and over and it doesn't work, you become disheartened. You lose your *cheshek* to keep trying. From here we see how one must view every *mitzvah* that he does. This is a *shlichus* from *Hashem*! This is MY mission! We should imagine *Hashem* Himself telling us to give *tzedaka* or keep *Shabbos* or eat kosher!

We must live our lives with a passion, because that is the only way to be a true servant of *Hashem*. **R' Avraham Chaim Feuer shlit'a** says that the numerical value of the word “ישראל” is 541. The numerical value of “אש” which is fire is 301. If you take the fire out of a Jew, which means you deduct 301 from 541, you are left with 240. 240 is the *gematria* of “עמלק”! In fact, this was exactly what *Amalek* did to us - אשר קרך בדרך” - means that he cooled us off! He made us cold! He took out the fire that was burning inside us after we experienced the extraordinary miracles of *Kriyas Yam Suf* and *Yetzias Mitzrayim*!

The root of “תלהבות” which means excitement is “להב” - a flame! If the flame of *Torah* is not ignited within us then we can live as *frum* Jews, but totally miss the point! We must always be filled with a fire of excitement and passion to do the will of *Hashem*.

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM R' CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

מחשבת הלב

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