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מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

והאספסוף אשר בקרבו התאוו תאוה וישבו ויבכו גם בני ישראל מי יאכלנו בשד וגו' (יא-ד)

The Jewish people complained that they did not have adequate food in the desert. They even had the temerity to denigrate the *Mann*, the Heavenly food that they received miraculously. It wasn't that they were hungry; they were simply sinners.

A boy by the name of Menachem Mendel Turm, was born in the German city of Hamburg in the year 5505 (1745). He was a brilliant child, but also a boy of deep emotion and thought. When he was eleven years old, he met the renowned **Maggid of Mezeritch ZT”L**, who took an interest in the boy and started him off in the pursuit of *chassidus*. Eventually, he went off to study in the *yeshivah* of the **Rebbe, R’ Shmelke of Nikolsburg ZT”L**, together with two of his close friends, Yaakov Yitzchok Hurvitz and Yisroel Hopstein. These three names eventually lit up the entire Jewish world with their greatness in *Torah, chassidus*, piety and righteousness. They became **R’ Menachem Mendel of Rimanov ZT”L**, the **Chozeh, R’ Yaakov Yitzchok of Lublin ZT”L**, and the **Kozhnitzer Maggid, R’ Yisroel Hopstein ZT”L**.

The *Rebbe*, R’ Mendel Rimanover, however, was unknown for quite a few years and it wasn't until he was eventually “discovered” that he became very popular and famous for the *tzaddik* that he was.

It is told that R’ Mendel would take frequent walks into the forest near the city of Fristik, where he would endure his solitude by praying with great energy and singing songs of purity and faith to the Creator. He was once in the forest, walking among the trees. Suddenly and without warning, he burst into song and dance, and his exuberance attracted a group of wayfarers who happened to notice a young man dancing with intense fervor. From his style of dress he appeared to be from Germany, so they called out in German, “Young man, why are you dancing in the forest?”

R’ Mendel continued dancing with an unusual aura of joy. “I am dancing because I am hungry,” he replied. The *chassidim* looked at him uncomprehendingly and he proceeded to explain. “I haven't eaten in a number of days and as a result, my stomach is growling. But the fact that I am hungry is a sign that I am alive and well. A person who is not well often has no appetite. Thus I am thanking *Hashem* that I am well and can feel hunger pains!”

Upon hearing this astounding thought, the group of *chassidim*, who happened to be on their way to Lizhensk, said to him, “You must come with us to Lizhensk! The *Rebbe*, R’ Meilech would appreciate someone like you!”

R’ Mendel had heard of the famed **Noam Elimelech**, but he had yet to meet him. He was only too happy to accompany them to Lizhensk, and they took him to the home of the *Rebbe, R’ Elimelech ZT”L*. When he walked into the Noam Elimelech's inner chamber, R’ Meilech said to him, “Young man, I have been waiting for you!”

From that day forward, R’ Mendel became a *talmid* and mainstay at the home of the Noam Elimelech. R’ Mendel, who had grown up in extreme poverty, had a custom to recite *Parshas HaMann* every day (*Yerushalmi* states that daily recital of the chapter of the *Mann* (שמות ט:ד-לו) describing how *Hashem* provided food for the Jewish people in the Wilderness, helps assure one of adequate sustenance), until he moved to Lizhensk, where he ate at the *Rebbe's* table. There, the *Rebbe* provided for him, so his food supply was assured. Having been raised in Germany, however, R’ Mendel was accustomed to eating with a knife and a fork, as well as with a genteel table etiquette, and he found it distasteful to eat without the necessary cutlery, as was the custom of the *chassidim* when eating food received from their *Rebbe*. Thus, although he had enough food, he felt a bit queasy and was unable to eat it. As a result, he once again began saying the *Parshas HaMann*.

He would remark, “When we pray for sustenance, we must ask not only for the food, but for everything we need in order to be able to eat the food. This explains why our forefather Yaakov requested, ‘*If Hashem will be with me ... and give me bread to eat.*’ (בראשית כח-כ) Why did he need to say, ‘bread to eat,’ and not merely ‘bread’? Now I understand why; a person cannot just ask for bread - he must also ask that he is able to eat the bread, and nothing distasteful prevents him from that!”

משל למח הדבר דומה

והיה חסיד ההוא אשר יישיב ה' עמנו והטבנו לך וגו' (ו-לב)

משל: There was once a hiker who trekked up one of the peaks of the Andes Mountains. Suddenly, an unexpected blizzard of snow blitzed him and he became stuck midway up the mountain. The storm lasted a few days and soon he was out of provisions, out of water, and he started freezing to death. He did have a cell phone with him and he tried a number of times to dial for help, but he was dismayed to find out that he had no time left on his phone.

The hiker saw no way out of his predicament and began preparing for the end. All of a sudden, he heard his cell

phone ring! It turned out that the cell phone company with which he was subscribed was having a special that month, and wanted to know if he wanted to buy more time.

“Buy more time,” he shouted. “Do I ever!” He was yelling with excitement at the lady on the other end of the phone.

It took him about a half-hour to convince her that he was not a prankster. Then it took six hours for him to guide the rescue helicopters to where he was. What was even more amazing was that his phone batteries didn't die in all this time because the freezing weather made them last longer!

עשה לך שתי חצצרות כסף מקשה תעשה אתם והיו לך למקרא העדה ולמסע את המהנות (ו-כג)

Moshe Rabbeinu used trumpets to inform the people when they were to journey and also to call them to congregate before him. Although the other vessels of the *Mishkan* and Temple were passed down from generation to generation, the trumpets that Moshe used were made from Moshe's own funds and used only by him. *Chazal* tell us: “*All the vessels which Moshe made were kosher for himself and (future) generations; the trumpets were kosher for himself but not for the generations.*” (מנחות כח)

R’ Tzadok Shmuel Suchard Shlit’a explains that the trumpets symbolize the method which each leader would use to gather and lead his flock. If a leader is not as successful as perhaps he should be, there is a tendency for him to rationalize and say, “If only I had someone else's charisma, or oratory style, perhaps I would succeed.” This attitude in a leader could bring about a relaxation of his efforts and even lead to a defeatist attitude. To prevent this, the *Torah* instructed that the trumpets used by Moshe were not to be handed down to future leaders. Each *manhig* must use his own trumpet, in other words, his own ingenuity, his own potential, and he must master all the resources at his disposal in order to do the best he can.

Furthermore, the trumpets also serve as a lesson to the congregation. If Moshe's trumpets were handed down and used by future leaders, and those leaders did not evoke the same response as Moshe, this would be detrimental to that leader and indict the people. There would be a constant comparison of *manhigim* and the people themselves would be blamed for being apathetic and unresponsive. Both leader and congregation must respond to each other. A new leader, of any kind (rabbi, boss, politician) must shape a new rapport with his people; the people, in turn, must learn to respond in a new way to the uniqueness of their leader.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ...

ענוה

The trait of humility, the attribute that personified *Moshe Rabbeinu*, is one that we speak about often but in all honesty, something which is far from our understanding and grasp. Not only that, but one can delve into the lofty trait of humility and learn it in depth, and then feel haughty over his great achievement! Learning is definitely the first step, but real application which requires amputation of the ego is not simple at all. In fact it is probably one of the hardest things in the world. All truly great people have this one characteristic in common: they are all humble. Otherwise they would not be truly great.

The *Mesilas Yesharim* (פרק כב) gives us the definition of humility by dividing it's actualization into two parts: Humility in thought and Humility in deed. We must think humbly and act humbly. We see this from *Rav Yochanan ben Zakai* who says, “*If you learned a lot of Torah, don't take the credit for yourself, because this is what you were created for.*” (אבות ב-ט)

There are two basic thoughts that keep a person humble. 1) DON'T TAKE THE CREDIT for any accomplishment in your life. **R’ Noach Weinberg ZT”L** would say, “Take the pleasure, but not the credit. You should feel happy about your achievements, but remember that it is all from *Hashem*. He gave you the talent, the ability, the ideas, and the strength. Thank *Hashem* that He gave you the opportunity, but certainly, don't take the credit!” 2) THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE CREATED FOR. Does a bird boast that it can fly? Does a fish feel haughty that it can swim? Of course not! Well, it is equally ridiculous to feel haughty over one's accomplishments. If *Hashem* gave you an ability or talent of any kind, it is incumbent upon you to use it!

TORAH GEMS

ויצו יהושע בן נון משרת משה מבהריז ויאמר אדני משה כלאם וגו' (יא-כח)

Two members of *Bnei Yisroel*, Eldad and Meidad, were given the power of prophecy. According to one opinion in Rashi, these two prophets foresaw that *Moshe Rabbeinu* would die in the desert and *Yehoshua bin Nun* would lead the people into the Land of Israel. Yehoshua, incensed at the disrespect that Eldad and Meidad displayed by revealing this prophecy in the presence of their teacher, asked Moshe to put them in prison. The *gemara* (עירובין סג:) points out that although Yehoshua meant well, he was taken to task, in this specific episode, for a very slight and almost unnoticeable infringement on his *Rebbe*, Moshe's honor. Yehoshua should have let Moshe decide what to do with Eldad and Meidad without interjecting his own opinion.

There seems to be a contradiction here. How could Yehoshua, while zealously guarding the honor of his mentor, Moshe, simultaneously commit an act of disrespect for Moshe, albeit an infinitesimally small one?

R’ Henach Leibowitz ZT”L comments that this *gemara* highlights the need for our intellect to maintain constant control over our emotions. Yehoshua's deep feelings of respect for Moshe and the *Torah* taught by him, precipitated an emotional reaction that ever so slightly overstepped the bounds of propriety dictated by his intellect. He should have known better than to offer an opinion in his *Rebbe's* presence.

This lesson can also be applied in our daily lives. All our actions must be examined and inspected to see if they are indeed proper. Our emotions are an integral part of what makes us human and we should never attempt to eradicate or eliminate them. On the contrary, we must utilize our emotions to the fullest degree, but only after they are directed and controlled by the powers of our intellect. By applying these ideas, we can guarantee that all our actions and reactions will serve to sanctify the Name of *Hashem*.

דרגה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

והאיש משה ענו מאד מכל האדם אשר על פני האדמה (יב-ב)

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