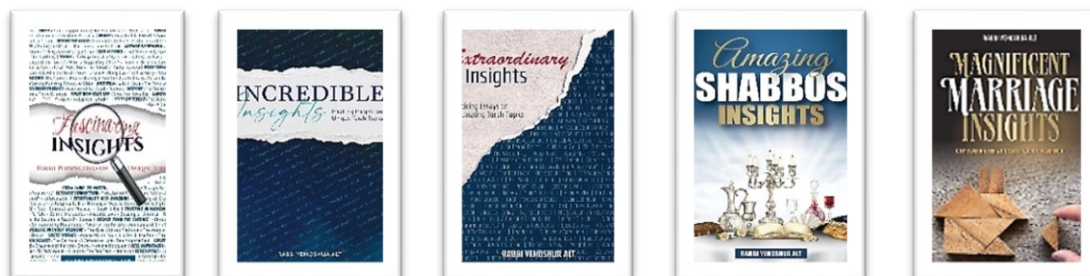


Fascinating INSIGHTS

ג' סיון תשפ"ג
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Wedding With Musical Instruments

A student of the Maharil (1365-1427) related the following in the name of his Rebbe:¹ The female ruler of the country passed away and for the sake of her honor, the current ruler ordered that there should be no playing music with musical instruments in the entire country for that year. This edict interfered with the Jewish wedding that was scheduled to take place within that year in a certain city in that country. The Mahari Segel (i.e., Maharil) was asked if the wedding should take place without musical instruments.



He ruled not to make the wedding without musical instruments because that is the main simcha of a Chosson and Kalla... He instructed that if it was not possible to do it in that city, then they should move the wedding to a place where it would be possible to play with musical instruments. And that is what they did. They traveled three *parsaos* (around 12 kilometers) to the city of Mainz (Germany) and had the wedding with musical instruments.²

The Ra'avya³ (1140-1225) wrote regarding a wedding that took place on Shabbos that it is permitted to tell a non-Jew to play musical instruments on Shabbos for Simchas Chosson V'kalla. This was because there is no Simchas Chosson V'kalla without musical instruments.

Burned Out or Fired Up?

¹ Maharil, Minhagim, Hilchos Eruvei Chatzaros, 7. Interestingly, the majority of the Maharil's parnassa was from Shadchanus money. He would write and send letters far and wide to match up boys and girls since everyone would listen to him. With this the following pesukim (Iyov 29:21-22) were fulfilled: לי שמעו...מלתי: people would hear me with anticipation; await my counsel silently. After my word nothing more was said; my speech would be pleasing to them (Maharil, Hilchos Chanuka, 1). In the Sefer Maharil in the Mechon Yerushalayim edition, there is an addition (Shinuyei Nuschaos, 10) "People would give him much more

shadchanus money than to others because they knew this was his livelihood."

² The Maharal (Chidushei Agados, Baba Kamma, Perek Hamineach, s.v. *bou vneitzei*) tells us that a Kalla is like a queen because a chosson is like a king (Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer, Chapter 16). A hint to this is found in *כתוב לב המלך* (Esther 1:10), when the heart of the king was merry, as its initials form the word *כלה*.

³ Hilchos Yom Tov, 795.

The Gemara⁴ relates that הכל בידי שמים חוץ מצינים ופחים, any misfortune that befalls a person is on account of a heavenly decree except for illness brought upon by exposure to cold and heat. This seems problematic since elsewhere the Gemara remarks that הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים, everything is in the hands of Heaven except for איראת שמים, fear of G-d?⁵ In truth, these two Gemaras complement each other as צינים refers to performing Avodas Hashem with passion or קרירות, coldness.⁶ So איראת שמים (Avodas Hashem) is in our hands and we can perform it with fire⁷ or with coldness, in a perfunctory way!⁸



The pasuk states צנים פחים בדרך עקש שומר נפשו ירחק מהם, thorns and snares are in the path of the perverse; he who guards his soul will distance himself from them.⁹ The Imrei Chaim of Viznitz would comment a wise man will guard himself (שומר נפשו ירחק מהם) not to use צנים, coldness and פחים, fiery passion in a crooked way — בדרך עקש. Rather use each trait in its time.¹⁰



When one gets older, he gets weaker, which can cause his התלהבות to taper. This can be used for good as he can have קרירות in the realm of that which is the opposite of Avodas Hashem. For example, he doesn't let the fire of anger from vitriol remarks make an argument flare out of control. Or, he doesn't have to run to his food with such zeal.

On the other hand, when one is young, he has the vernal quality of התלהבות, חמימות. This can also be used in a negative way if this ability is used for one's passions and desires.

As with all situations one should take that which is at hand and utilize it for Avodas Hashem.¹¹ In this case, one should use the weakness of old age to

counter the evil inclination and use the fire of his youth to come closer to Hashem.

In truth, authentic התלהבות can be had even by one who is older and קרירות can be had by one who is younger and both can be used in a positive way. This is what is couched in the phrase נער הייתי גם זקנתי.¹² In this way we can grasp¹³ ולהשיב לב אבות על בנים ולב בנים על אבותם as he should use these traits — the trait of coldness represented by אבות, and the fire of youth symbolized by בנים — for Avodas Hashem.

Although one may be weak at an old age, according to his ability, he can have vernal fire in his Avodas Hashem.¹⁴ This fire can be contained within one's mind and heart where he has a burning yearning desire to come close to Hashem.

In 1997, a man named Lenny called the rabbi of a Shul in Dallas, Texas expressing to him that he wanted to donate to his shul. When Lenny was asked why he wanted to donate money to a shul that he had no affiliation with, he explained that he just returned from a tour in Israel. He said in Jerusalem, "I was amazed by the intensity of a man dressed in a long black frock with ringlets of hair by his ears (a Chassid) whom I saw praying at the Western Wall (the Kosel). I was so moved by the depth of fervor (התלהבות) he displayed that I wanted to do something for him. Feeling uncomfortable to approach him, I decided when I return to Dallas, I'll find a temple where this man would be likely to pray and make a contribution in his merit. When I got home I went to the Kosher bakery where the owner told me that a Chassid like that would daven in this type of shul. Thus, I gave money to your shul." As his connection with the rabbi grew, he gave more money and raised even more from his friends. When Lenny passed away his mother gave tens of thousands of dollars in his memory. These far-reaching consequences were ignited by being inspired by someone davening with התלהבות. May we all inspire and be inspired through התלהבות.

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⁴ Kesubos 30a

⁵ Tosafos, ibid, s.v. הכל. Brachos 33b.

⁶ Amalek are the ones who try to taper and cool our התלהבות, fire of Avodas Hashem. This is hinted to in אשר קרר בדרך (Devarim 25:18), which is stated by Amalek, as קרר is rooted in קר, cool off.

⁷ When the Lubavitcher Rebbe was asked about paying people for *Shemiras Hasdarim* for kollel, he said that anyone who doesn't come early and leave late from kollel shouldn't be in kollel. That is to say, one must be so ardent and passionate about learning.

⁸ Approximately 35 years ago, a newcomer (Baal Teshuva) to Judaism who wasn't sure how to daven was in Beis Midrash Elyon in Monsey while they were davening with tremendous fire as he described it. A child present there asked him why are you not davening, to which he replied I don't feel like it. The child returned the reply with, "Who said Hashem wants your Tefillos only when you feel like it?"

⁹ Mishlei 22:5.

¹⁰ On August 5, 1949, lightning struck a tree in a valley named Mann Gulch in Montana. 15 firefighters were airdropped into the valley by their chief, Wagner Dodge. The winds became stronger and the fires began to spread rapidly towards them. Dodge pulled out a lighter and lit the grass around him on fire. His small fire burned out a small area in front of him. When the fire caught up to him, it had nothing to consume and therefore it burned around him and bypassed him, whereas the 13 firefighters not with him were killed by the fire. (The other two that survived were able to find shelter by climbing inside a small crevice in the canyon's

rock wall.) By creating his own fire, he survived the massive fire around him. We are surrounded by fires—the negative influences of desire and the like. We try to outrun these fires but they are too pungent. Instead of outrunning them, we should light our own fire, living a life of spiritual passion. Then that flame will protect us from the fire around us.

¹¹ The well-known R' Machlis who hosts 100 guests, more or less, for each Shabbos meal every week in his apartment in Yerushalayim once said, "It's not my home. It's Hashem's home that I live in." In life, we must realize that what we have is a gift from Hashem and therefore we should utilize it accordingly.

¹² Tehillim 37:25. Tosafos explains (Shabbos 88a, s.v. כפה) that Hashem forced us to accept the Torah although we already said נעשה ונשמע... (Shemos 24:7) since we may have changed our minds upon seeing the tremendous fire that accompanied the Revelation. R' Shmuel Birnbaum asked that if this is the case then why didn't Hashem give the Torah without the fire? He answered that Torah without fire (התלהבות) is not Torah.

¹³ Malachi 3:24.

¹⁴ The Imrei Emes (Vayechi, 5667) cites his grandfather the Chidushei Harim that even when a person is old, he can learn like a child, meaning through learning with *hischadshus* it is like he is a child starting to learn. Then the following pasuk can be fulfilled: הנוהר לנער על פי דרכו גם כי יזקין לא יסור ממנו (Mishlei 22:6), meaning that he will remain with *hischadshus* and those youthful days won't depart from him.