

פרשת בא

חלק ה' – גליון 17

י' שבט תשפ"ד

מאת ר' ש. קאפלין שליט"א

הרה"ג ר' מתתיהו סולומן זצ"ל

We spoke last week about having גדלות, incorporating other people into our lives, thinking about them, feeling their pain, and feeling their worry.

I would like to say a few דברי הספד about ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל. He was a גדול in many areas, he was a גדול in תורה, in התמדה, and in הלכה.

"He did this all for one reason: he cared about כלל ישראל, what's going to happen to ישראל"

He was well known for having this גדלות, of course other גדולים also have this מידה of גדלות, but not always is it so noticed to the extent where we see with ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל how he excelled in this area; this area of thinking and feeling about everybody.

I would like to explain a little bit what type of person he was and to understand that we wouldn't have expected all of this from a person with such stature.

ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל had a tremendous presence, when he walked into a room,

whether it was a זכר or any שמחה, the room would go quiet, he had a tremendous presence wherever he went. I'm speaking about even before he had his white beard, he was a powerful figure, when he spoke, he was able to be משפיע in a tremendous way.

When I was a בחור in ישיבה Gateshead one Thursday night it snowed very heavily and the בחורים went outside in the חצר and started throwing snowballs at each other, as the night went on more and more בחורים joined in, there must have been about two hundred and fifty boys having a snowball fight.

When the snow had finished in the חצר, they went out to the street on Bewick Road and as you can imagine the noise level was very very high until one of the neighbors called the police. The police car came and as the police came out the

car some בחורים started pelting the police with snowballs.

The police quickly went back into the car and called for more reinforcements until five or six police cars came to the scene to try and get the בחורים into the dormitories and to stop all the noise.

They came out their cars, but they didn't stand a chance, the בחורים carried on throwing the snowballs at each other, they couldn't do anything, they totally ignored the police.

Suddenly, literally everyone disappeared, within twenty seconds there was nobody around. What had happened? Where did they all go?

What happened was very simple, ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל was walking down Bewick Road, everyone ran inside, it was all over.

Yet, with that power, with that presence there was always a tremendous softness how he reached out to everyone, and cared for every single person, and that is something we can take from and be inspired to do in our little circle.

Already in those days he had such an השפעה in England and beyond, at a young age he was being asked to come to America and all over the world.

But together with all this he would take care of all the little things as well, he would take care of the individuals, he would have so much care and concern for everyone and wherever he could help he would help and go all the way.

This is something we can connect to and be inspired by, together with the fact that he had humble beginnings, he grew up here in England, it wasn't as if he grew up in prewar Europe in the famous הדרים and ישיבות, he grew up in England where תורה was at a much lower level in those days, Yiddishkeit was very weak in those days.

And he wasn't a person who had the easiest life either, I remember he once said קדיש after מעריב one night.

The בחור who had a קביעות with him that night asked him, "Have you got a יארצייט today?"

"No," said ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל, "I'm saying קדיש for a child that I lost at birth..."

And he continued, "Ah! I had a זכות to bring a נשמה down to the world..." that's the way he looked at it.

He had many other challenges; it wasn't as if he had a smooth ride.

We're speaking about a person who had humble beginnings, many challenges,

and yet he wasn't hardened by his challenges, he never stopped caring for even the little things and the lives of individuals.

That is גדלות, the first פסוק which the תורה tells us about מרע"ה is "וירא בסבלותם", as נתן עיניו ולבו להיות מיצר, רש"י tells us, עליהם, he felt for them, that is גדלות, that is the first description the תורה gives us about מרע"ה, he felt for them, he cared.

Maybe we should start doing something small every day without anyone knowing or without advertising it to nurture within ourselves feelings for others.

The hostages in Gaza have now been there for over one hundred days, besides for the fear and the terror they are living in, what circumstances are they living in? Where are they sleeping and on what? What facilities do they have? Maybe we should do something on the quiet, to feel for their pain, believe me גדולי ישראל are doing things to be משתתף in their צער.

It was standard for ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל to call up אלמנות on שבת or sometimes even go and visit them, and when he moved to Lakewood and become even busier and more famous and more

powerful, he never forgot the אלמנות and יתומים.

He taught the whole world the אחריות of every single child in town, he was the first one to stand up for this, in Lakewood about twenty-five years ago when it started becoming hard for children to get into schools, a problem which is now rampant all over the world, either because the מוסד is full or they feel you don't fit in or whatever the reason is.

A ר' אהרן לייב once came into מנהל trying to justify himself not to accept a child who didn't fit in.

ר' אהרן לייב זצ"ל said, "What? You want the child to go learn on the לבנה?"

There was a person who tried to stick up for the מנהל and said, "But the parents of the school don't think it's suitable for the child to come in..."

Said ר' אהרן לייב, "גאווה... גאווה...!!!"

He didn't give in.

ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל was the first one in the world to make such a stand, and the stand was, "We are not starting the school year until every child has a got a school to go to."

He had the power to do such a thing, and no school opened for three days until the

מנהלים sat down and worked on every child being placed in a school.

He had a feel for everything, he was משגיח in Lakewood ישיבה, but he had heard that children had not been accepted to schools so he stood up and said, "We are not starting the school year until every child has a place to go!" Everyone was included in his mind, he was a גדול הדור, the whole generation was included.

He once turned up at a בר מצוה in Lakewood, the father had sent an invitation only because it was כבוד to send the משגיח an invitation, he didn't expect him to turn up.

When he came, he was asked to speak and he said over the following, "I came to this בר מצוה because this boy is my friend..."

When ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל came to Lakewood he made many changes, one of the changes he made was to the idea of going to a circus on חול המועד, he felt it was wrong, there is פריצות there and other things which are not suitable for a Jewish child and he spoke in public very strongly about not going to a circus.

A few days later he was walking down the street and a little boy of ten stopped

and asked, "Can I ask a question?"

He asked as follows, "What should I do? I have already bought a ticket for the circus? I had to pay half the ticket myself; I saved up a long time for it! Can I go just this last time?"

ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל said to him, "No!"

"Can I sell it somebody else?" asked the boy?

He said "No! You can't sell it!"

"So what should I do with it?" the boy asked.

ר' said "Trash it! Put it in the bin!" מתתיהו זצ"ל.

The boy was a little shocked, but accepted what he was told to do.

ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל then said to the boy in a soft voice, "Are we still friends...?"

The boy replied, "Yes..."

ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל at the בר מצוה, "I am coming to the בר מצוה of my friend..."

He was strong, he didn't cave in by the pleas of the young boy, it wasn't easy, and he finished off in such a nice way, "We're still friends..."

There are so many stories how he really put himself out and connected with individuals who he had no שייכות to whatsoever.

I remember in Gateshead there was a father who spoke to ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל about his son who wasn't too enthusiastic about learning and about ישיבה in general, the father was getting very worried, "I try my best to encourage him and to inspire him and I try to learn with him but it's not really working..."

The father had met ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל on the street and asked, "What am I supposed to do?"

ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל said, "Send him into me... let me speak with him..."

This boy was learning at the time in משגיה in ישיבה קטנה, ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל, ישיבה גדולה, but it made no difference, if there is boy who needs inspiration perhaps I can try to inspire him.

The boy came around to his house, ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל spent time with him, he took אחריות for everyone, he reached out to everyone, there was no difference where a person belonged, his ישיבה, a different ישיבה or another town or another continent.

The תורה tells us that שפרה ופועה didn't kill the babies like פרעה told them to, "ויהי כי יראו המילדות את האלקים", they had tell us, ..., they connected to the יראת שמים of אברהם

עקידה, as it says by אברהם after the עקידה, "כי עתה ידעתי כי ירא אלקים אתה", *you have יראת שמים*.

R' Elya Ber Wachtfogel זצ"ל would ask: Not to kill the babies is called having יראת שמים? Not to do a mass murder is יראת שמים? What was the big יראת שמים that they didn't kill the little babies?

The מדרש asks on the פסוק which tells us, "ותחיינן את הילדים" –the פסוק should have just said they didn't kill the babies like פרעה told them to, obviously that means that they lived, why write that.

Says the מדרש: They didn't just not kill them, they helped them live, they looked after the babies, they went out their way, they soothed them, quietened them, they went out of their way to make their mothers lives easier.

The fact they didn't kill them wasn't the big יראת שמים, the יראת שמים the תורה is referring to is how they went completely against the spirit of which פרעה wanted them to do, ותחיינן את הילדים – they kept them alive, they had every reason to stay on the quiet side and run away and not be noticed, but they did just the opposite working against פרעה, they had every excuse, but they didn't use these excuses, they did what הקב"ה wanted

them to do, they had יראת שמים not to allow any excuses.

אברהם אבינו had every תירוץ and excuse not to carry out the עקידה, as the חתם¹ סופר explains he had a נבואה which wasn't clear מאירה שאינה מאירה he could have interpreted it in many ways, he had so many excuses not to carry out the instruction, he had gone around all his life preaching and telling people how one mustn't offer up a human sacrifice, he had an הבטחה that יצחק was going to be his future, he had all the excuses he wanted but he went out of his way, he had יראת שמים and he went and did the עקידה that was the test, that is יראת שמים, leave all the תירוצים out of it.

The מילדות had every reason to run away, especially because they didn't carry out פרעה's instructions, they had every excuse to hide, but they went out of their way to make sure the children will be cared for בפני פרעה, and that's the level of יראת שמים the מדרש is comparing to the יראת שמים of אברהם אבינו, no excuses, no תירוצים.

It once happened when there was a big מחלוקת in England, there were two sides with great אידן on both sides. It was

mainly happening in London and ר' got himself involved to sort things out, getting involved meant becoming very unpopular, but it didn't matter, to him this was saving someone, and he got completely involved, he cared about everyone, he didn't give himself תירוצים that it's not good for his popularity, that wasn't his חשבון.

When the story was over and he had managed to save this person, I was a yungerman at the time and he made a וועד to explain the whole ענין, and he said to us then, "The day after the story I called up the opposition and I said, "From today on we can be best friends!" It doesn't matter, he had one opinion and the others had a different opinion, but from today onwards the story is irrelevant, "we can be best friends..."

This is what type of איד he was, it was all לשם שמים, even when it would cost him a lot he would go to do what was right, there were no תירוצים in his life to anything.

During the last few months of his life he was basically unable to do anything, just about move his hands. Every day his grandchild would take him to shul, put

¹ See פרשת וירא תש"פ

him in the wheelchair, into the van, drive to shul, unstrap the wheelchair, take it out the van, put on his טלית ותפילין, open the סידור for him, taking care of him, it would take him over two house every day to go and come back from שחרית.

The grandchild thought to himself, "He anyway cant function poperly... Why doesn't he just daven at home, it will be so much more simple and less complicated...?"

The next day, he put his תפילין and טלית on at home, sat him by the table and opened his סידור.

ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל took the סידור and closed it.

His grandchild thought it happened by mistake, so he opened it again.

Again ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל closed it.

He realised he wanted to go to shul, he put him in the van, but by the time he arrived they were already up to אשרי ובא at the end of davening, this time he didn't close his סידור, this was the message he wanted to show: I want to be in shul every morning.

He had every תירוץ not to go to shul in such a state, he was a פטור totally חולה from going to shul, but there was no such thing as excuses he had the true יראת שמים.

These are things we can learn from, it's something we can connect to, "Have I really got an excuse? Is this a real excuse? Maybe I can do it!?"

We all know how twelve years ago he managed to arrange this great event, never in the history of כלל ישראל since חורבן הבית was there such an event where so many people attended, the big internet awareness, he worked tirelessly for months to organize this event and like everything there were obviously oppositions and there were times when it looked like it wasn't going to happen, he would have tremendous אנגמת נפש when there were times when he thought it wasn't going to work out, but he carried on and he went together with the Suklener Rebbe זצ"ל and they worked so hard to get the entire כלל ישראל on board. He did this all for one reason: he cared about כלל ישראל, what's going to happen to כלל ישראל? If they are not made aware of the dangers what will happen to כלל ישראל?

This event changed the whole atmosphere in the world at an early stage of technology just in time.

ר' זכות a few times to take ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל from Gateshead to

Manchester, I remember once taking him to the חתונה of ר' ישראל פריעדמאן שליט"א, I was honoured to give him a lift. He was so easy going, when I asked him, "what time would you like to go?"

"Whatever is good for you..." he told me.

I was the driver, he was the guest, I was so impressed, everything was up to me, he let me decide everything, no demands as the חובת הלבבות writes that a person should aim to be משאו קל.

At the חתונה they offered him to bentch, it was a *chassidisher* חתונה, many big Rebbes were there, ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל was brought up in Gateshead as a *litvitcher*, he asked me to find out, "How are you supposed to bentch here what is the right titles to say in the ברשות. What are you supposed to say? I want to make sure not to do anything out the ordinary or not appropriate for the setting here..."

I went to ask someone who knew and I told him exactly what he was supposed to say, he followed exactly what he was supposed to say, although he was a *litvicher*, he had a tremendous respect, and wanted to follow the right protocol. He was always including

everyone else and everybody else's feelings.

The next morning after I came back from Manchester I got a phone call from ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל and he asked me, "How much did the trip cost?"

I told him, "It was a big זכות to take you..." I had gained so much from him I didn't want to take anything from him, but he told me, "No no, please tell me how much it cost!"

I told him the amount; I think it was sixty-two pounds in total for the car hire and petrol.

About ten minutes later one of his children came around to my house with an envelope with a nice letter thanking me for taking him with sixty-two pounds – the full price.

When I met him the next day outside כולל I said to him, "We should at least share the costs..."

He said, "No! We did share it! You did the driving and I'll pay for the car!"

Such *menchlichkite*, this is the same ר' מתתיהו זצ"ל who the whole world has heard about, he was flying around the world, I was a yungerman in כולל, "No! you took me, let me at least pay for the car hire and the petrol..."

On that journey, there happened to be traffic on the way, so after some time we stopped on the way in the service station.

I went into the service station and he waited in the car.

I came back to the car and I saw he was speaking. Who was he speaking to?

Then I saw he had in his hand a mobile phone, it wasn't usual in those days to have mobile phones.

I thought to myself alter: He had a phone with him! I'm sure people have his number! He was such a busy person, when I was in his house his phone didn't stop ringing, the whole time it was ringing.

Often you give somebody a lift and the fellow is on the phone, it's not so geshmak.

He did not touch that phone the entire journey! He was with me on that journey the way there and the way back, we spoke in learning we spoke השקפה, but he did not pull his phone out once. These

are the little things we can learn from him.

Someone met him after not following his advice, the first thing he said to him with a big smile, no bad feelings, he didn't take it personal, that's גדלות.

He had a tremendous גדלות constantly in incorporating everyone into his life and not allowing for a second to only think about himself, he lived for other people.

When I learnt in Gateshead I was surprised to see how his front door was always open, whenever I would pass his house the door was open, it was like an open house, anyone could walk in, everyone was welcome. That was the address where anyone could turn to and enter without a second thought.

There are many points we mentioned which we can be inspired by and incorporate into our own lives, especially this ענין of גדלות to bring the lives of others into our own lives.



[Written by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן](#)

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פרשת בא

חלק ד' – גליון 16

ל' שבט תשפ"ג

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

אמונה שלימה

The תורה tells us the four לשונות of גאולה, by the last one the פסוק writes "והוצאתי וגאלתי ולקחתי", and only then it says, "וידעתם כי אני ה' אלקיכם", *I shall take you to Me as a nation, and you shall know that I am Hashem.*

the extra words is דיין אברמסקי זצ"ל

by "ולקחתי", the פסוק is referring to מתן תורה, and only then it says, "וידעתם כי אני ה' "

then you will know that I am אלקיכם", the הקב"ה.

"is not asking us to move the rock, all He is asking us is to push the rock, push push push push and push more."

"וידעתם כי אני ה'": דיין אברמסקי explains the תורה, even with the many miracles of the מכות and קריעת ים together with יציאת מצרים and סוף, yet that alone doesn't bring to "וידעתם כי אני ה'", "וידעתם כי אני ה'".¹

"בלעדי תורה לא יוכל", דיין אברמסקי

האדם להשיג אמונה שלימה וברורה אפילו אם יראה בעיניו ניסים, Without גלויים,

a person cannot reach a מזריגה of תורה, even if he sees open

¹ [Just to mention, I always found it difficult to understand this explanation of דיין אברמסקי, because in this weeks פרשה it clearly says, "ולמען תספר באזני בנך ובן בנך את אשר התעללת במצרים ואת אותתי אשר שמתני בם וידעתם כי אני ה'". we see that through the נסים which took place in מצרים we can reach "וידעתם כי אני ה'".

However, דיין אברמסקי surely had a יישוב how to answer the two פסוקים.

After דיין אברמסקי was sent free from Siberia, ר' אלחנן ווסרמן הי"ד met him on a train and asked him, "When exactly were you set free from Siberia?"

"It was such a momentous occasion," he said, "I'll tell you exactly, on this and this day at this and this time..."

דיין אברמסקי then said to ר' אלחנן, "I was learning with the חפץ חיים and suddenly the חפץ חיים exclaimed, "the Slutsker Rov is free!" I

looked at the clock and I memorised the time and date.

The second you went out from the gates of Siberia, that was when the חפץ חיים said you are free."

The חפץ חיים was given the first telegram! With the התורה כח you get told the news before the telegrams, it's a פשוט.

ר' אלחנן then added, "And you should know, the חפץ חיים would say four פרקים of פרקים every day so that you should get released."

The חפץ חיים was so דיין אברמסקי, when we hear a vort from him, I'm sure there is a יישוב.

Perhaps, the "וידעתם כי אני ה'" in this weeks פרשה refers to the תורה which is learnt about גמרות and the many יציאת מצרים, the many נסים in מצרים, this brings to "וידעתם כי אני ה'"]

miracles, he will not reach a true הכרה in the לימוד התורה if it's not through רבש"ע it will not be the sane, "שהמאור שבתורה, מחזיר האדם למוטב ומקשר אותו להקב"ה ומגיע " it's with לדרגת באמונה שלא שייך בלא תורה. the תורה that a person connects with the רבש"ע, a person can learn מוסר, he can be deeply into the הבורא נפלאות, he can delve into the many ראיות that there is a רבש"ע, but the real "וידעתם אני ה'" will only come through learning תורה.

added, it's not משה שטערנבוך שליט"א just the אמונה in the רבש"ע, it's more, "וידעתם כי אני ה'", it's required that we actually know it, it's not just enough that we believe it, we have to know it, and this only comes through התורה לימוד.

Accepting the יסורים

One of the מ"ה קניני התורה which is needed to acquire תורה is יסורים קבלת. The *velt* ask a קשיא: One who hasn't got יסורים, how is he going to have this קנין to be קונה the תורה? It's clear that we need all מ"ה קניני התורה in order to have the true דרגה of תורה, if one doesn't have יסורים or he is on the מדריגה that he does not feel his יסורים, what is his way to be קונה תורה through היסורים קבלת.

ספר רוה חיים ר' חיים מוואלאזין זצ"ל writes: קבלת יסורים can refer to the way

one learns, when a person is עמל ומתיגע in his learning with all his כוחות and is ממית חזון, as a איד once came into the חזון איש who was sitting with a cloth soaked in cold water around his head, he was red in the face, he looked ill, the איד asked, "What's with the חזון איש?"

The חזון איש told him, "I've been working two months on a משנה in טהרות and I don't understand the משנה!" He had high temperature, his face was bright red, or as the גמרא tells us how the fingers of an אמורא were bleeding from his עמילות בתורה, we see again and again in גדולי ישראל and with our חז"ל how they were ממש מתעמל in תורה to a degree where they ממש had יסורים from the עמילות.

Explains ר' חיים מוואלאזין קבלת, the תורה is to *taka* learn with a "mutch-a-ri", it's a מדריגה, and with this a person is קונה תורה.

The heavenly voice

I would like to share another פשט – שבעים פנים לתורה, the יסוד is an important קבלת יסורים. There is another area of תורה which we must have when we learn without which we might lose חשק.

I once heard the following story from ר' שמחה סלובייציק שליט"א from Brooklyn,

I'll let you decide if the story is true or not.

There was a איד in Arizona, a farmer, an *airlicher* איד. In front of his house there was a massive rock which weighed fifteen tons, that's how he bought the house, and the rock stayed there for many years.

One day he comes out of his front door and he hears a heavenly voice – the sweetest voice he had ever heard, "Push the rock for half an hour!"

He understood that the בת קול had come from שמים, so he starts pushing the rock with all his might, but nothing happens, it doesn't move.

The next day he comes out of his house again, and yet again he hears the בת קול tell him, "Push the rock for half an hour!"

He pushes and pushes, but nothing happens, it doesn't move.

The same happens, day after day, week after week, month after month.

Nothings changing, the rock isn't moving, the only thing that is changing is that his muscles are getting bigger and bigger, he's becoming a גיבור.

A year passes, he's pushing and pushing every day for half an hour, he's hoping

for a miracle to happen that the rock will move.

One day he comes outside and he sees the שטן, before he even says anything, the שטן tells him, "You're going to go push the rock now for half an hour?! I'll tell you a secret! Us מלאכים in שמים work very hard, we're working every second of the day. Every day we get half an hour break, to entertain ourselves during that half an hour, Hashem tells you to **move** the rock and then we all come and watch you trying to move the rock!"

The איד got the shock of his life, he didn't know where to put himself.

A few minutes later the heavenly voice came from שמים again, "Push the rock for half an hour!"

This time he spoke up and said, "רבש"ע! What's going on here? Am I entertaining the מלעה של מלעה? What's happening here?"

The heavenly voice replied, "Did I ever tell you to move the rock?! I told you to **push** the rock, you're doing a *gevaldiga* job, you carry on pushing, nobody ever told you to move it."

He was never told to move it, he's doing what he's supposed to do its not for entertainment.

Loose ends of the סוגיא

A few weeks later he comes outside and he sees the שטן again. The שטן told him, "I heard what the רבש"ע answered you, it's *taka* true, you're right. But let me ask you another question! Are you mad? For thirteen months you have been trying to push this rock! Wasting half an hour every day! Just forget the whole thing! What are you getting out of it?!"

The איד became completely confused, he was מבובל, he didn't know what to do with himself.

He decided to go for a walk, he walked into the town and suddenly he hears screaming. What happened? A truck had fallen on somebody! The person can't breathe, he only has minutes to live, he has to be taken out quickly.

He ran around the corner to see the scene, and he was shocked to see that it was his very own son under the truck!

By now he was already a גיבור עצום, although it was a truck which weighed a ton, but he managed to budge the truck enough so that they could pull his child out.

His child was saved and it was then when he understood, "יש השבון", this was the ענין of pushing the rock without any purpose every single day.

I want to bring out a *moridicker* נקודה: There is an area of יסורים which we have when we learn. We learn *shtark* a סוגיא, *shtark* means we spend time on the same סוגיא, but למעשה with most of us, even when we come to the end there are still loose ends throughout the סוגיא, and because of this people often feel a *gevaldiga* חלישת הדעת, we spend weeks on the סוגיא, but at the end of the day there are still many חלקים which we are not clear in, there are difficult ראשונים, I have קושיות, I'm going around in circles, a person often feels upset and he begins to start having depressing thoughts which can really pull a person down which ultimately causes a person to lose his חשק התורה.

I would like to give another פשט when the משנה speaks about "קבלת יסורים". ר' חיים is to understand what קבלת יסורים אבות in משנה writes on the מוואלאזין זצ"ל "ייגעת ומצאתי תאמין", when a person finds a מציאה on the street, it's a "מציאה" – he doesn't work for it, all the רבש"ע wants from us is יגיעה, where we actually reach is then "מצאתי" – it's a gift and that's not our business, that's what הקב"ה gives us, הקב"ה is not asking us to move the rock,

all He is asking us is to push the rock, push push push push and push more.

The *וואמנם* writes very clearly, "ואמנם", *There is one way which the הקב"ה gave us*, "שמדריגתו", למעלה מכל שאר האמצעיים המקרבים האדם "אליו והוא תלמוד תורה", *which is the greatest way a person can become connected and מתדבק* with the *הקב"ה*, as דיין taught us, with the נסים, with the מכות, with סוף ים קריעת ים סוף, that's all very good, but the "וידעתם כי אני ה'", the great תורה only comes through קשר.

The *וואמנם* continues, "מי שישתדל בהבנתם, יקנה כפי השתדלותו שלימות על שלימות", a person who tries to understand, he will be קונה according to his השתדלות – according to his toil and effort, and with this a person will reach the "וידעתם כי אני ה'", the "שלימות על שלימות", he doesn't write its dependant on how much we understand.

I believe this is very important for us to hear, we're learning well, we're shtieging, our minds develop and we want to get a crystal clarity in the סוגיא, and often we don't reach there, even though we have spent so long on a סוגיא,

which often brings rise to tremendous חלישת הדעת, it brings to יסורים and frustration, and the קבלת היסורים is to understand that I am doing what the רבש"ע wants me to do, the הבטחה of "וידעתם כי אני ה'" comes through pushing the rock, whether it moves or not is not my problem, I'm doing a good job by pushing it with all my might and that's what's important.

The truth is, the more we *shtieg* the more loose ends we feel in the סוגיא, a person who learns on a basic level then everything seems very simple.

But the deeper we go, the more we feel we don't understand, the more we work the more questions we start having, and instead of having a צער, we must be מקבל these יסורים, as the הפץ חיים speaks about the מדרש which teaches, "אם שמעת בעולם, הנה – whatever we try to learn in this world, "תשמע בעולם הבא מפי הקב"ה" – we'll hear it and understand it from the mouth of הקב"ה in the next world!²

Whatever we try understanding in this world, will be explained to us in the next world, we will hear it מפי הקב"ה and we will understand properly.

² See 32 גליון תש"פ במדבר תש"פ where we spoke about this מדרש.

If there are loose ends in the סוגיא, this should not take away our שמחת התורה in any way, this should not take away our feelings of accomplishment because the requirement is not to understand, the requirement is to be משתדל בהבנתם, to be עמל ומתיגע to understand, to push the rock.

בהמה and the כבוד

Often, such מחשבות can also come from bad places, such as the desire for כבוד by knowing the סוגיא properly.

I once heard from the ראש הישיבה שליט"א a *gevaldiga vort*:³ On the פסוק "ויקם מלך חדש", the מדרש brings a פשט, and explains how the מצריים at first wanted פרעה to enslave כלל ישראל, however פרעה refused to listen, he had יוסף to הכרת הטוב who saved מצרים from the famine. Because he wasn't listening, they threw him out the palace, until after three months he agreed and returned and that's the מלך חדש he became king again. רבינו יונה writes, without הכרת הטוב a person is like a בהמה, he is no better than an animal.

Explained the ראש ישיבה שליט"א: This is רדיפת פשט in the מדרש! Because of his רדיפת "ויקם מלך חדש" – it was a new king, a בהמה had become king, he wanted the מלוכה back and therefore he was כפוי טוב, and with this teaches רבינו יונה a person becomes a בהמה, כבוד can bring a person to become a בהמה.

סיבה רדיפת הכבוד can sometimes be the why these thoughts are so depressing to us, we want to know it all for the כבוד.

We must be מקבל on ourselves to *horvver* in learning, and with this we will reach the קבלת "וידעתם כי אני ה'", and this is the היסורים, remember the משל, our עבודה is to push the rock, the *eibishter* never told us to move it, He is happy with us pushing it, and we must remember, the way to reach a true ידיעה in the רבש"ע and to be strong in our אמונה comes through with which a person is זוכה to the highest דרגה in "וידעתם כי אני ה'".

אברהם דוב הכהן כהן – Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn

³ See 16 גליון תשפ"א בא תשפ"א where we spoke about this מדרש.



פרשת בא

חלק ג' – גליון 19

ו' שבט תשפ"ב

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

טענות *He won't come with*

"דבר נא באזני העם וישאלו איש מאת רעהו ואשה מאת רעותה כלי כסף וכלי זהב." (י"א, ב')

Please speak in the ears of the people: Let each man request of his fellow and each woman from her fellow silver vessels and gold vessels. תold הקב"ה כלי כסף to borrow כלל ישראל to tell מרע"ה

from the וכלי זהב מצריים.

The ברכות in גמרא

"אין נא אלא" writes on this Possuk: *The word נא can only be an expression of request, the פסוק is saying, "I beg of you, "בבקשה ממך" direct them with regard to this so that אברהם אבינו should not say, "ועבדום וענו אתם קים בהם", He fulfilled in them the decree, "They will enslave them and they will afflict them, "ואחרי כן יצאו ברכות גדול לא קים בהם", but he did not fulfil in them, "And afterwards they will depart with great possessions.*

מרע"ה was asking הקב"ה "Please do me this טובה!" Why was הקב"ה pleading to מרע"ה? Because אברהם shouldn't come with any טענות – *'You've not been מקיים the "ואחרי כן יצאו ברכוש גדול"!*

The גמרא is difficult to understand. הקב"ה was telling משה to tell כלל ישראל

כלי כסף וזהב borrow from the מצריים because otherwise will אברהם אבינו

And if אברהם אבינו will come with a טענה? And if אברהם אבינו will not come?! הקב"ה promised "ואחרי כן יצאו ברכוש גדול" – הקב"ה always keeps to his word! Why does it depend on אברהם coming with his טענות? What's פשט in this "חז"ל? Why is הקב"ה pleading for the sake of אברהם?

Let me share with you a *gevaldiga* פשט from my father חז"ל: "ל: זצ"ל teach us why מצרים had to go down to כלל ישראל. The "אני ה'! ... אברהם אבינו promised רבש"ע "I am going to give you this land to inherit. To this

responded, "במה אדע כי אירשנה", *Whereby shall I know that I am to inherit it?* Since אברהם questioned the promise of הקב"ה he was punished that his descendants will have to suffer a bitter גלות in מצרים.

What's difficult to understand is: The פסוק earlier says clearly, "והאמן בה" – when הקב"ה promised אברהם that he will have children, he believed and trusted הקב"ה. Having children was a much bigger miracle than conquering the land of ישראל! Why suddenly now when הקב"ה promises the land of ישראל does אברהם question Hashem?

What's also difficult to understand is: On the one hand הז"ל are teaching us that he was punished because of his lack in אמונה when he exclaimed "במה אדע". On the other hand, רש"י quotes from the מדרש a different understanding in the words "במה אדע", "אמר לפניו הודיעני באיזה, זכות יתקיימו בה", *He said before הקב"ה, 'Let me know through what merit they will last in the land?'* He wants to know with what זכות will they merit ישראל? Did he mean to question the words of Hashem, or was he simply asking with what זכות will ישראל merit כלל ישראל?

Be careful with your words

The Alter of Slabodka זצ"ל gives an explanation based on a מדרש in פרשת קדושים. The מדרש teaches us a *gevaldiga* "אוי לו לאדם שיוציא דבר מפיו ואינו יודע, מוסר – האין מוציאה" – *woe is to a person who says words with his mouth, yet he doesn't know how to say them.* אברהם כלל said "במה אדע" and therefore כלל ישראל were punished to go for 400 years into מצרים.

Explains the Alter: Of course, the כונה of אברהם was "באיזה זכות" – what merit do they have? He most certainly trusted the promise of הקב"ה, as it says just before this, "והאמין בה" – he trusted Hashem. However, a צדיק must be careful when he says something, his words must be clear, they shouldn't be misleading, they shouldn't be able to be translated with a different meaning – in a bad way. When a person speaks, even if his intention is good, but if his wording can be translated in a wrong way, there will be a תביעה on him. When a person speaks, he must make sure his words can only be translated in a good way, he must make sure they cannot be translated into a bad way. Although אברהם said "במה אדע" – and the intention

was to ask "באיזה זכות", yet nevertheless, his words could also be translated with the simple understanding, which implies a lack of אמונה, not trusting the promise of Hashem, and asking, "How do I know what You are saying will happen?"

This was the תביעה on אברהם אבינו. Since one could translate "במה אדע" in a bad way, there was a תביעה on him and therefore his children were punished with גלות מצרים.

The real gold and silver

With this, my father זצ"ל would explain a *moridicker* פשט in the גמרא: "הקב"ה: גמרא: "ואחרי כן יצאו ברכוש, אברהם promised "גדול? What does this "רכוש גדול" refer to?

The ספרים teach us: ברכוש גדול refers to the תורה, הנחמדים מזהב ומפז רב, תורה, it refers to רוחניות. הקב"ה was referring to the תורה which He is going to give כלל ישראל, and of course, no question about it, הקב"ה is going to keep His word, He's going to give us the תורה. הקב"ה doesn't need אברהם אבינו to come and make sure He keeps His words, הקב"ה keeps his words.

"דבר נא", משה said to הקב"ה: "חז"ל in פשט – Please! I don't want אברהם to come with טענות! I'm going to keep My word

– I'm going to give you the תורה, but אברהם may come with טענות. I punished him with גלות מצרים because I judged him by translating his words in every way you can possibly translate them, I had a תביעה because one could translate his words wrongly, אברהם אבינו could then come with a טענה, "הקב"ה! You most definitely must keep Your words in all the ways you can translate them!

ברכוש גדול would keep his word of גדול, he'll give כלל ישראל the תורה, however, רכוש גדול could also be understood with it's simple meaning, referring to זהב כלי דבר נא באזני העם וישאלו, therefore, וכלי כסף, because I don't want אברהם to come with any טענות.

A *gevaldiga* פשט. What can we take out from such a פשט?

Even a gesture

ראש ישיבה of ר' אליעזר גורדן זצ"ל of Telz, when he came to London to collect funds for his ישיבה he was נפטר. Many stories happened to him when he was in London, which caused him tremendous נפש אגמת, ultimately bringing about his death. At the לוייה Rav Hilmen – the chief Rabbi of England at that time said over the Possuk which יוסף

said, "כי גנב גנבתי מארץ העברים" – *I was snatched away from the land of the עברים – the land of the תורה which was Lita at that time, "וגם פה לא עשיתי מאומה", and here in London I made no money, כי "שמו אתי בבור, they just placed me into the pit.*

One of the stories which happened in London was the following: They arranged for ר' אליעזר זצ"ל to speak to the שוחטים in London. Whilst speaking, he noticed one of the שוחטים and exclaimed, "Hey! What are you doing here?! You were a שוחט in Telz! What are you doing in London?"

The שוחט went white, "You don't know why I'm here?"

"No..." said ר' אליעזר זצ"ל.

"You once came to inspect the knives," said the שוחט, "and when you had a look at my knife you waved your hand, you made a gesture with your hand trying to tell me that my knife wasn't too kosher... I understood you weren't happy with my שחיטה so I left Telz and moved to London to become a שוחט here..."

The Telzer ראש ישיבה was shocked, "I don't remember such a thing," he said, "most probably I was thinking of a

and I said to myself, "*neh! Yena is not מסתבר...*" and I moved my hand at the same time whilst thinking to myself...I didn't mean to criticise anything"

He had tremendous אגמת נפש, he never had any intention to put down the quality of his knife. This was one of the incidents which they said he couldn't be סובל.

He was gesturing about the סברא in תוספות! A person must be extremely careful with such things, his words, his actions must be clear to everyone, one shouldn't let his words and actions be translated in the wrong way. The gesture shouldn't be taken wrongly.

The ר' יהושע in גמרא סוטה tells us about חירם בן פרחיה who put someone into חירם. This person wanted to ask מהילה and mend his ways and came to ר' יהושע בן פרחיה whilst he was saying שמע, and ר' יהושע made a סימן with his hands that he can't respond. However, he took this as a message to go away – *I don't want you here.* The גמרא continues that he left and went straight away to serve עבודה זרה.

Although we've spoken in the past about the one on the receiving end, the one who is receiving the comment or the

gesture how they must learn how to process their thoughts properly so that the comments don't disturb them¹, the *shtech* or the comment here and there must be processed in a healthy way and not misinterpreted. However, the person giving the comment cannot rely on that. He must remember, "אוי לו לאדם" – *woe is to a person who speaks and doesn't realize how he is speaking*, there will be a תביעה on the person like we find by אברהם אבינו. Every time one makes a *shtech*, even as a joke, he must be careful how it can be translated by other people, it's an אחריות מוטל on a person to use his speech only in a way that one cannot understand from his words a bad meaning. We must speak carefully; we must choose our words with שכל.

Twenty minutes!

I was sitting by a חתונה on Tuesday night next to דיין יהושע פוזן שליט"א and he told me the following: In Meron on ל"ג בעומר on a בחור he knows personally was one of the first people to fall in that tragedy. He is physically extremely strong, and he realized that the only way to save himself was by placing his elbows on the

ground in a certain position to stop his body getting crushed, leaving enough space in front of his chest so that he could still breath.

The weight was getting heavier and heavier, but he did it minute by minute, one more minute, one more minute...

Twenty minutes later they got to him, he still had space between his arms and his chest.

A phenomenal story, his life was saved.

דיין פוזן שליט"א told me: When he heard this story from the boy he took from it a *gevaldiga* התעוררות – a *gevaldiga* inspiration.

Nowadays, people are much more sensitive, there's much more mental health issues in the world, as I once saw a magnet on a fridge, "One out of four people have some sort of mental difficulties in life, and if you look at your three closest friends and they all seem to be ok, it must be you."

Many people seem to be living a smooth life, but you never know what's going on behind the scenes just under the surface, you never know what a person is going

¹ פרשת ויגש תשפ"א גליון 12

through. It's impossible to know, but some people out there are struggling below the surface, different things are happening in their lives and they are struggling.

People are constantly struggling below the surface, with issues in their life, they don't speak about it, they keep it to themselves, they don't tell you about it, but they are struggling immensely.

Sometimes people are literally holding themselves up with tremendous pressure just to keep themselves going. The weight becomes heavier and heavier, and they still keep holding themselves up. The weight keeps piling on and they continue against the odds.

Sometimes it can be just one wrong word to them! We cannot often know or fathom the ramifications of hurting somebody's feelings, disturbing somebody, taking away his כבוד.

We often cannot imagine where this person is holding in life, we don't know what he's going through, he's holding himself up carrying a tremendous pressure, and with one small comment or hurtful sentence, with one small gesture he could collapse, and he could let go and fall apart.

We think we have a חבר where everything is going good with him. We often have no idea what is happening under the surface! The difficulties he has! He's about the collapse – he's pushing and fighting with all his might. We don't know what our friends are struggling with.

They are holding tight, but they are surviving with a tremendous effort. And often one can say a comment, injure the person, pain the person, and he can collapse.

We must make sure to be aware of this. Remember this מוסר from the מדרש in פרשת קדושים, the מדרש is not only addressing "אוי לו לאדם, אברהם אבינו" - שיוציא דבר מפיו ואינו יודע האיך מוציאה" - he doesn't know how to say it, we must think twice before we speak. You want to say something to somebody?! Think! Am I saying it nicely? Can it be misinterpreted? Will he take it wrongly? When you make a gesture, perhaps the person will take the gesture wrongly, there can be tremendous ramifications which you might never know about, it's our אחריות.

The Gateshead Rov ר' בצלאל ראקו זצ"ל told me the following story: The מלבי"ם

was once traveling and he stopped off in a בית המדרש. He sat down and a minute later the חתם סופר walked in. Nobody had told the מלבי"ם, but the place he was sitting was the place מיוחד for the חתם סופר.

From the way the חתם סופר walked in, the מלבי"ם *chapped* straight away that he was sitting on his place. The מלבי"ם jumped up, but the חתם סופר told him, "*Bleibt dort* – stay here!"

The מלבי"ם would say that כל ימיו he was afraid. *Bleibt dort* can also mean stay where you are! Don't *shtieg* anymore, it can refer to רוחניות as well. For the rest of his life, he was afraid he was not *shtieging* the way he could have because of the words of the חתם סופר, which in שמים might be interpreted in all ways possible.

The דיבור has a *moridicker* כה, one word can have many meanings, we must be careful. We don't have the כה in our words like the חתם סופר, but we have a different כה in our words: we can destroy

somebody's life with our words, that כה we all have.

Remember this story we just mentioned, it's such a powerful message: after twenty minutes he managed, perhaps a minute later he would have collapsed, but the same applies emotionally in other people's lives; we don't know what's going on in their lives, we must soften ourselves a bit, we're often very hard, be sensitive, we must realise the person were speaking to or the person you're having a connection with might be holding on for dear life keeping himself afloat with all his כוחות, although to us everything seems to be perfect, emotionally and physically, but we don't know what is under the surface, we must take extra care, because saying something, even if you didn't mean it in a bad way, but if it can be translated in a bad way we will be held responsible, and remember if you're not sure whether to say something then just don't say it!

סיג לחכמה שתיקה



פרשת בא

גליון 16

י' שבט תשפ"א

מאת ר' ש. קאפליו שליט"א

The king leaves for three months

At the beginning of תורה the גלות מצרים describes to us, "ויקם מלך חדש על מצרים" "A new king arose over מצרים, who did not know יוסף." [רש"י הקדוש] יוסף famously quotes from the חז"ל "ל' the מחלוקת between רב and שמואל, "חד אמר חדש ממש", one says this means a new king, in the literal sense, "וחד אמר שנתחדשו גזרותיו", and the other says that it was the same king who was the ruler during the time of יוסף, he issued new decrees.]

The מדרש however explains with a different explanation: The מצריים came to פרעה and exclaimed, "Let us enslave כלל ישראל."

פרעה replied, "No! We must have הכרת הטוב saved our country from starvation and destruction! How can we enslave כלל ישראל – his children?"

However, they were so strong in trying to convince פרעה, he was forced to leave; leave his throne, leave his palace and leave go of his tremendous power he had over his country. פרעה gave it all up – he gave up his kingship.

After three months, פרעה had second thoughts. He began to miss the days of מלכות – the days of luxury, living as a true מלך.

Regretting his original decision, he told the מצריים, "Okay... I will be your king and I will do as you wish... we will enslave כלל ישראל..."

פרעה changed his mind, he now listened to his subjects and enslaved כלל ישראל.

How does this event exactly explain "ויקם"

"Gelt machs a person meshuga!"

The מדרש "מלך חדש?" has told us a nice

story, but at the end of the day it was the same king? In what way was he a *new* king?

Nothing less than an animal

The ראש ישיבה שליט"א explained with a *gevaldiga vort*: The רבינו יונה writes that a person who does not have הכרת הטוב is considered like a בהמה – like an animal.

By פרעה taking back his job and his kingship, he was כופה on the טוב, he had no הכרת הטוב for יוסף הצדיק, making himself into a "בהמה".

Therefore, "ויקם מלך חדש על מצרים", a *new king arose over מצרים*, it wasn't the same

person as before who took back the rulership, it was a new מלך – a new בהמה taking power over מצרים.

Why did פרעה want to take his מלכות back?

It was because of his כבוד – his tremendous desire for honour, he missed the days of כבוד.

כבוד can make a person turn into a בהמה.

Like a real baby

When I saw this מדרש and I heard this vort, I thought this could perhaps explain to us the current events taking place during the past two weeks in America.

Of course, we must be מכיר טוב to Donald Trump, he helped the אידן whenever could.

Trump claims he won the elections; it's all one big mistake, it's all one big fraud; he most probably still believes he's still the president of America.

He incited his followers, "*fight to kill.*"

He gave his speech, and the crowd charged up to capitol hill and they actually broke into the parliament, bringing tremendous danger to many people who were there in parliament.

The entire world looked at this scene in shock and hoor, "Is this democracy!? The president incited this?!?"

בזיונות serious ממש, he will go down in history in disgrace. 150 years ago was the last time capitol hill was attacked, when the British tried taking over America!

Everyone knows that democracy stands for: *don't touch the parliament building.* And here the president himself incited it all to happen?!

He's going through true בזיונות. If you look at him, he looks like a baby. He was president for four years, lost the next election, and then acts as a sour loser, like a child who loses a game of chess or monopoly. No I won!! It's all שקר וכזב! He incites riots! נורא נורא!? What's the fellow thinking?!

The answer is simple: When it comes to כבוד, a person loses himself, he acts like a בהמה. Even the most normal person, if he's tempted to כבוד and he's pulled towards honour, he loses himself, makes a fool of himself, acts like a young child – like a real baby.

This was פרעה, the king who became a בהמה. With כבוד a person loses himself completely.¹

I would like to speak about another נקודה, to see how a person can go blind and

¹ See 18 פרשת וארא תש"פ גליון 18 where we spoke about מרע"ה who had the מידה of בורח

מן הכבוד on an incredible מדריגה, something truly phenomenal for all of us to learn from. He

crazy, something we must work on, to train ourselves to avoid it and try program our mindset that it shouldn't be programmed in such a manner.

The truth is, that if we look at the פרשיות of יציאת מצרים, there's a great פלא, what happened?

The chase out of Egypt

There is מכות in last weeks סדרה and there's מכות in this wees סדרה, and it culminates with "ויהי בשלח פרעה את העם" (י"ג, י"ז), *It happened when פרעה sent out the people.* The גמרא (מגילה י:) writes, " ויהי בימי אחשורוש, אמר ר' לוי... דבר זה מסורה, בידינו מאנשי כנסת הגדולה, כל מקום שנאמר ויהי, is an expression of ויהי – אינו אלא לשון צער. *sorrow.*

The גמרא אור גדליה quotes this and asks: What was the צער happening over here?! This was one of כלל ישראל's happiest events in history – finally after 210 years they could breathe the air of freedom?

The מדרש also asks about the לשון of ויהי " כלל פרעה? בשלח פרעה? Was it פרעה who sent כלל ישראל out of מצרים? It says in the פסוק, א- " כלל פרעה took רבש"ע – ל מוציאם ממצרים" *out of מצרים?*²

made as if he was nothing, just a שליח of שלח, taking absolutely no כבוד for himself, until the extent that he didn't even receive a mention in the פסח של פסח, as the וילנא גאון writes.

He bid them his farewell

The מדרש explain: "בשלח" means לשון לניה (as it is stated by ואברהם הולך עמם, אברהם (לשלח), which means to imply that פרעה himself met them off, he accompanied מצרים כלל when they went out of ישראל.

In fact, the מדרש continues to describe the complete change of behaviour – פרעה was a changed a person. "הפללו עלי" he exclaimed, "Daven for me! Have רחמנות on me! Think about me!" He spoke to them nicely, with giving כלל ישראל a royal send off.

The מהר"ל writes: With לניה, two people retain a קשר – they accompany each other to keep the connection going, to let the connection remain.

Therefore, אין ויהי אלא לשון צער – this wasn't any good for כלל ישראל; the fact פרעה accompanied כלל ישראל, this left a השפעות רעות – it left a connection of רעות between כלל ישראל and פרעה.

כלל פרעה bid them his farewell, giving כלל ישראל his royal send off.

It suddenly all changes

Three days later, פרעה לבב ועבדיו, "ויהפך לבב פרעה ועבדיו, ויאמרו מה זאת עשינו כי שלחנו את ישראל

² I would be interested to find out why the מדרש quotes this פסוק which בלעם הרשע exclaimed, as opposed to quoting the first of the הדבריות אשר הוצאתיך, עשרת הדבריות "אנכי ה' אלוקך אשר הוצאתיך, עשרת הדבריות" (כ, ב) *I am Hashem, your God, Who has taken you out of מצרים.*

(י"ד, ה) *And the heart of פרעה and his servants hardened.* In what way did his heart change? רש"י explains, "נהפך ממה" *"שהיה, It changed from what it was,* פרעה *because אמר להם, קומו צאו מתוך עמי!"* *had originally told them, "Arise! Get up and leave from amongst my nation!"*

First, he told them "Go!", and now suddenly he has changed his mind.

רש"י continues, "ונהפך לב עבדיו", *and so did the hearts of his servants change,* "שהרי לשעבר היו אומרים לו עד מתי יהיה זה לנו למוקש!", *for in the past they would say to פרעה, 'Until when will these people be a hazard to us?'* They couldn't cope originally, "Let them go! Get them out of here!" they would say.

The תורה continues, "ויואסר את רכבו ואת" *עמו...* *He harnessed his chariot and attracted his people,* and only then, "ויחזק" *Hashem hardened the heart of פרעה.* The preparation and the first thoughts of going to chase כלל ישראל came from פרעה himself, only then at the last second הקב"ה hardened his heart – giving him a push to go. However, the הכנה and the change of heart was פרעה himself, he himself changed – with his own בחירה.

A true פלא! What's going on over here? For a long time already he wanted כלל ישראל to go, the רבש"ע began to harden his

heart already at the sixth מכה. Instead of screaming, "מה זאת עשינו כי שלחנו את ישראל מעבדנו", *What is this that we have done that we sent away כלל ישראל from serving us?* He should have been screaming, "We should have sent them out a few months ago! It would have saved from all this trouble and mess!"

We're holding during the שבועה of מכת בכורות! Everyone has just lost one of their close relatives! Nevertheless, "ויהפך לבב" *his heart changed!* What's פשט in such a thing? What's the פשוט פשט why they decided to chase after כלל ישראל!? It makes no sense! They've gone crackers – the lot of them! How do we explain it?

It's the ingredient to become crazy

And the answer is a one-word answer: *Gelt!* As רש"י writes, "ועכשיו נהפכו לרדוף", *now they had changed their attitude to chase after כלל ישראל on account of their property that they had lent כלל ישראל.*

One answer: *Gelt! Gelt machs* a person *meshuga!*

They saw the messages from the רבש"ע! They saw a year of מכות! They saw how הקב"ה had been looking after the אידן! They saw it all! They said it all, "קומו צאו" – "עד מתי יהיה למוקש" – מתוך עמי!

until when?! Get rid of them,' they told
פרעה!

They were running to their doom. But when it comes to *gelt* a person goes blind and becomes *meshuga* – he goes crazy.

ר' שלום שבדרון זצ"ל writes, "A person becomes שיכור – he becomes drunk when it comes to *gelt*."

It doesn't make sense!

About ten years ago, the world were bewildered about the Madoff affair; a איך who managed to con the entire world that he was a brilliant investor.

He went on for twenty – thirty years. He made a Ponzi scheme of fifty billion pounds!! The banks invested with him! *Nebech*, צדקה organisations invested with him! People from all around the world invested with him!

He fooled the entire world! Banks went bankrupt! The head of the Royal Bank Of Scotland had to resign, he invested 800 million pounds with Mr Madoff!

Afterwards, the investors would exclaim, "Meshuga!? What were we thinking!? How can a person make such high returns year after year!? There's no פשט in it!"

The answer is the one word: *Gelt! Gelt machs* a person *meshuga*! A person is blind when it comes to *gelt*.

Robbing a bank

In days gone by, when they would go with guns and rob a bank, they would first need some help from someone working in the bank to get him on their side, to help them to get in.

What would they do? How do they get him to be on their side?

They would take him out to a meal in a restaurant, and ask him, "Do you want some money... Do you want to be a millionaire?!..."

"Well..." they would tell him, "we need a bit of help from you..."

The moment he hears that, he helps them. He becomes blind, *gelt* overrides anything.

A person is drunk when it comes to *gelt*.

Make up your mind!

How did הז"ל know it was the *gelt* which made the מצריים change their minds?

ר' שלום זצ"ל explains: Look at what they said! Complete drunkards they are! מה"

זאת עשינו כי שלחנו את ישראל מעבדנו, *What is this that we have done that we sent away*

כלל ישראל *from serving us?* One second!

כלל ישראל haven't been working for you for over an year! Their God isn't letting you enslave them for a second longer!

Then when they chased after them, they went to kill them!! They started shooting

their arrows! One second, first they are saying they want their slaves back! But then when they chase after them, they are going to kill them!

Complete drunkards they are!

It must have been the money! There was nothing else to explain their behaviour!

When a person doesn't make any sense – he acts like a שיכור, there is only one answer: *gelt*.

There's no other way to explain פשט, it's only because of the *gelt*.

It's a big and hard test

The truth is: We must understand that already before a person is born, it is decided how much money he will receive. We must understand the נסיון of money, it's a tremendous נסיון.

As it once happened when a איד came before the הפץ היים to ask for ברכה to become a גביר, promising then to support מוסדות התורה.

וכך הוא – the fellow become a tremendous עושר. The הפץ היים travelled to Moscow to meet with this עושר to collect funds for his ישיבה.

“Rebbe!” the עושר replied, “I'm sorry but I just can't part with a penny...”

Money and עשירות is a tremendous נסיון, something we don't really understand.

So give it all up?!

The Kotzker זצ"ל would say, “The נסיון of the עושר is so hard that he himself knows that the עני is having an easier life!”

Asks the Kotzker, “So why doesn't he just give it all up if he knows the עני is having a better life?! No more נסיונות!!”

Said the Kotzker, “But he can't part with his כבוד – he can't leave his honour behind!”

כבוד and ממון goes together. A person goes crazy – he doesn't think rationally when it comes to honour and money.

The children and grandchildren

I remember meeting a איד as a בחור who told me that he ב"ה had a stable and successful פרנסה. I asked him if he had enough money to live off until the rest of his life.

“Yes sure...” he told me, “I have plenty for my entire life...”

“So why are you still working?!” I asked him.

The fellow replied, “I am hoping to buy each one of my children a house when I marry them off אי"ה... and for the grandchildren too... so that they can all sit and learn with יישוב הדעת and מנוחת הנפש without any concern about their פרנסה...”

Fine – very nice, what a lovely caring father and grandfather.

Many years later, when the fellow was already an old man, I met him, and we began schmoozing about some of his שיטות, which one of them were, "I don't give any of my kids money!! They have to start from scratch like I started from scratch..."

Suddenly it all changed – the complete opposite! It doesn't make any sense!

Gelt machs a person *meshuga!*

It shouldn't pull us

מוציאין את האדם ל teach us how *gelt* is מן העולם – it can drive a person out of this world. Money can take a person out of the בית המדרש sitting and learning in the בית המדרש must work on themselves to avoid this שאיפה – this desire to money.

We get very taken in and affected by the גשמיות around us, and we must train ourselves that this is not our תכלית החיים, this should not be our שאיפה.

It's a tremendous נסיון – understanding that every פרוטה is from the רבש"ע for a purpose to be used in the correct way. Money is not there to use to indulge into the luxuries of life in עולם הזה. And as the תורה writes at the beginning of פרשת "כי השחד יעור עיני חכמים ויסלף דברי משפטים, *for the bribe will blind (even) the eyes of the wise and make righteous words crooked.* We must know this and

internalize this constantly, how we mustn't allow this to affect us, *gelt* is very dangerous which can make us think wrong and completely warp our brain.

We must look at *gelt* objectively, and with just reading a few מאמרי חז"ל and a few פסוקים in קוהלת – שלמה המלך – brings us down to earth, what's truly important in life, it puts everything into perspective.

Where's his money?

What's *taka* פשט then?! We see people out there doing minimal השתדלות – he's not running after money and yet he's having a hard time making פרנסה?

The תנא דבי אליהו writes, "ואם תאמר", *And if you will ask*, למה, "אם הקב"ה אוהב תורתו, למה תורה *loves a persons הקב"ה* – אינו מעשירו? *then why is he not rich??*

In וואלאזין it once happened when one of the wealthiest people of the town lost all his money. He went to the בית דין to ask them, "Perhaps you can tell me what I have done wrong?!"

They tried working it out, but to no avail, he was perfect, he was doing everything על פי תורה והלכה.

What was the פשט?! He was a wonderful איך – truly being עובד הקב"ה with keeping all the מצוות. תרי"ג. What had he done wrong? A true פלא!

Many years later one of the great גדולים remarked, "Now I understand why he lost his money. This man had a son called the ר' חיים בריסק, בית הלוי זצ"ל, and a great grandchild known as the Brisker Rov."

Hashem loves his תורה

The תנא דבי אליהו teaches: "לכך כל תלמיד חכם שמרבה במלאכתה של תורה ואינו מכניס פירות הרבה, סימן יפה לו, שהקב"ה אוהב את Any תורתו, שאם יעשיר יפשע מדברי תורה." *who learns a lot of תורה however does not manage to have a successful פרנסה, it's a good sign to the person, it shows how much הקב"ה loves him and his תורה, for if he would receive riches this may disturb his תורה, his חשק in תורה and his התמדה in תורה.*

!תורה loves his הקב"ה

The עשירים have so many disturbances. Who said we would have the בית הלוי and his children, if this man would have remained an עשיר – constantly being disturbed in הזה?! The רבש"ע sometimes doesn't give a תלמיד חכם riches because of the love Hashem has to his תורה.

We must constantly look at the גשמיות around us as a *gevaldiga* נסיון, something which can blind a person. We must lift ourselves – constantly learn the words of the בעלי מוסר, surrounding ourselves with the השקפה of our true החיים, תכלית, what we are doing in this world, with having the שאיפות genuine in life.



Transcribed by Avrohom Dov Kohn – אברהם דוב הכהן כהן

All mistakes, omissions and errors are mine.

פ ר ע ש ת ב א

גליון 19

ו' שבט תש"פ

מאת ר' ש. קאפלן שליט"א

We hear many-a-time about natural disasters taking place throughout the world. Just a few weeks ago there was a volcanic eruption in the Philippines. 200,000 people had to evacuate. From one day to the next people had to leave their hometown. A tremendous פחד. Again and again, we hear about different tragedies and disasters in different places. A few years ago in the far east, a terrible tsunami took the lives of 250,000 people! There are earthquakes, mudslides, strong winds, extreme weather conditions. Constantly we are hearing about natural disasters around the world.

Often, we simply think to ourselves, *this is all going according to nature and taka we must feel sorry for the victims.* However, is there anything there more than just feeling

bad for the
Has this got
to do with
There is a
letter

"מביא פורענות, הקב"ה", *This is the characteristic of* "וכן מדתו של הקב"ה"
"כדי שישמעו ישראל, *He brings punishments upon the nations,* על האמות"
"שנאמר", *so that ישראל should take heed and be fearful,* "ויראו"
"*I have* "הכרתי גוים נשמו פנותם... אמרתי אך תיראי אותי תקחי מוסר."
destroyed nations; their towers have been laid desolate... I thought that
you would fear Me, that you would learn a lesson!" (רש"י, שמות ז', ג')

victims?
anything
us?
famous
written by

הפפן חיים:

"הרעש"

"הגדל שהיה ברוסיה, *There was a tremendous earthquake in Russia (approximately 1000 miles from where the חיים חפפן lived),* " שנהרגו ונפעצו מאות ואלפים אנשים ונשים וטף", *where thousands of people were killed – including men, woman and children,* שנעשו " וגם במדינתנו הרגישו מעט, *their homes collapsed and became their graves,* בתיהם קבריהם" "מה זה עשה ה' *and even in our village, we felt to some extent this earthquake.* ברעש זה "הלא הוא טוב ומטיב לכל, ורחמיו על כל מעשיו ולא *do this? הקב"ה* לנו? " " *for isn't He the one who bestows good to all and is merciful on all His creations?*

The חיים חפפן continues: "אלא המבין יבין, שמזרז אותנו הקב"ה לתשובה ומראה לכל שבידו לעשות " *We should understand,* הקב"ה *makes natural disasters to remind us to do* כל מה שירצה" " *and to show us that all is in His hand and He can complete whatever He desires.*

The חפץ חיים concludes: If we would have נביאים nowadays, they would be the ones to tell us to do תשובה and change our bad and evil ways. However, "בעונותינו הרבים" the רבש"ע gives us these messengers through natural disasters, "כדכתיב" like it is states, "עושה מלאכיו רוחות משרתיו אש ליהט", *He makes his messengers into strong winds and His ministers into volcanos.*

These are the natural disasters which devastate countries and destroy people.

When we hear about natural disasters – even far away, teaches the חפץ חיים, it's a message for us. Its meant to wake us up – give us a *shake*. They are there to give us a wakeup call: what we're doing and where we are heading.

Everything is happening for us to derive messages from הקב"ה. The plane which was shot down from the sky a few weeks ago. 150 people's lives were snuffed out in a second. Of course, every person on that plane was supposed to die. They could have died in their beds earlier that morning. However, הקב"ה wanted us to hear about their death. Why? TO WAKE US UP.

In fact, this is what רש"י הקדוש teaches in last weeks (ז, ג), "וכן מדתו של הקב"ה", פרשה (ז, ג), "וכן מדתו של הקב"ה", *This is the characteristic of הקב"ה, "מביא פורענות על האמות", He brings punishments upon the nations, "כדי שישמעו ישראל וייראו", so that ישראל should take heed and be fearful, "שנאמר", as it states, "הכרתי גוים נשמו פנותם... אמרתי אך תיראי אותי תקחי מוסר".* *I have destroyed nations; their towers have been laid desolate... I thought that you would fear Me, that you would learn a lesson!"*

It's meant to be an inspiration.

However, when we receive a חיזוק – an inspiration, there always lies one big problem. After the התעוררות, it doesn't take too long until the inspiration disappears. How are we supposed to harness the inspirations that come to us on a daily basis?

There is a פסוק in ל"ג, ירמיה ל"ד, "כה אמר ה' אלוקי ישראל, אנכי כרתי ברית עם אבותיכם ביום, לאמור מקץ שבע שנים תשלחו איש את אחיו העברי." *This is what Hashem says, 'I made a ברית with ישראל כלל the moment they left מצרים: After seven years they must send free their עבד עברי. Just before מצרים כלל ישראל left מצרים, they were instructed about sending free a עבד עברי after seven years.*

The מפרשים all ask: שילוחי עבדים took place decades after יציאת מצרים! First there was 40 years in the מדבר followed by 14 years of conquering and settling into ארץ ישראל! It only began when יובל was in place – 54 years later! Why was it necessary to create this ברית with כלל ישראל - there and then the moment they leave מצרים?

When I moved to Manchester, many south Africans too, were moving to England at the time. I remember them telling me the difficulty they experienced moving to Manchester. There in south Africa they had cheap domestic help doing all their housework. It's very hard to change. They've never washed dishes in their life! They had never cleared a table, swept or mopped the floor before! משל למה הדבר דומה, if the government would ban washing machines from being used! We wouldn't cope without it.

נסיין explains: To let an עבד go free is a very difficult. You've had him for seven years. He's done everything for you. Indeed, it's difficult to leave go. On the other hand, the עבד himself is waiting for freedom. He's counting down the days. His only will power to stay alive is knowing that soon he will be set free.

הקב"ה therefore commanded כלל ישראל with the מצוה of שילוחי עבדים the moment they were let free from מצרים. Why? Because that was when they understood the importance and happiness in breathing the air of freedom! There and then. It was then when they could understand the מצוה properly.

Later in ארץ ישראל – living in a life of luxury, they wouldn't have the feel of what it means to be let into freedom. Rather, now at יציאת מצרים – מעבודות לחרות – was the time to establish, "לאמור מקץ שבע שנים תשלחו איש את אחיו העברי".

מצרים - כלל ישראל were expected remember those feelings of what it meant to leave מצרים - becoming a free man.

Every one of us receives inspirations at different times of our life, different times of the year and even different times of the day. There are many times a person becomes inspired. How do we keep those inspirations going?

If a person receives an inspiration from a שיעור, בעל דרשן or a close accident; a person at that time should write down those feelings of inspiration. Later, when the inspiration begins to wear off, he will read those feelings and automatically relive the feelings of

ל explains: Of course, he could later take the sword away. However, at that moment of inspiration when he realized it was forbidden to marry this lady, immediately, to inspire himself even more, he took an item which can kill a person and put it in between him and the lady! Continuously, when he looks at the sword, he will remind himself of this powerful inspiration. Later, when the *יצר הרע* became stronger, he looked at the sword which reminded him straight away about the feelings he experienced *בשעת מעשה* when it was clear in his mind that he would not complete any *עבירה*!

Accordingly, he never ever sinned - *וואת עליית על כלנה* - *but you have risen above them all*. The *ספרים* bring down a phenomenal concept regarding the way the brain works. They write: Often, the *גוים* would make a show, a very cruel show. They brought animals and put them into a pen. As they brought the animals on stage into their pen, they would play a special music and the animals would start dancing! The audience didn't realize that these people were actually nasty people. On the bottom of the pen they placed before the show, boiling hot coals. They thought the animals were dancing because of the music, however, little did they know that the animals were dancing for a completely different reason – because of the pain coming from the hot coals.

Like this, they would make a lot of money.

Once when they played this “special music”, they realized that some of the animals left outside in the field were also dancing! What's going on? They weren't on hot coals?

The explanation was: Physiologically, that music became connected in their brain to pain in their feet. It's known as phantom pain. You feel pain when truthfully there is no pain there. The animals always associated this music to pain in their feet. When they heard the music they started jumping around because they felt this phantom pain. [It's therefore very important not to learn under *לחץ*, *pressure*. If you learn too often with a pressure, eventually your brain associates the *גמרא* with a "לחץ" – a not comfortable feeling. Even when you're not under pressure in reality, however the *גמרא* will represent one big *לחץ*.]

put the sword in between. This is a sword which will reach my neck if I do this *עבירה*! Every time, he looked at the sword he got an inspiration.

We receive many inspirations, and sadly too often our inspirations diminish until they disappear completely.

If a person wants an inspiration to stay, he must put something solid in place. We can write it down, or put a קבלה in place, or something which will remind us of those inspiring and inspirational feelings.

There is yet another important aspect with the way to harness a התעוררות – an inspiration. The חכמה is to write down our feelings and make the החלטה STRAIGHT AWAY.

ר' ישיבה in בחור from London once told me about a story about a בחור who would hardly learn anything. One day in the dining room someone said a powerful *vort* (not specially to him, but to everyone) about the תורה of השיבות. The בחור was so inspired; he dropped his knife and fork and ran upstairs to the בית המדרש and started learning.

Later he became the biggest מתמיד of the ישיבה and today he is one of the greatest דינים in ארץ ישראל, אדם גדול מאד.

The ראש ישיבה would say, “Had he *benched* he wouldn’t have become the person he became.” It would have been too late. The התעוררות would have gone by then.

ר' יעקב הלל שליט"א was once מדויק: When ר' עקיבא received his התעוררות from the water which made a hole in the stone, the מדרש teaches, "מיד נשא ק"ו בעצמו...", the idea was "מיד" – immediately.

You have to do things straight away. To say, ‘I’ll start tomorrow,’ will never happen. By tomorrow morning the התעוררות would have long gone with the clouds. Not next week, not next zeman. But rather, straight away at the time of the inspiration.

R’ Yossi Wallis in his book *Incredible*, brings a story about a mother who phoned him about about her son who wants to marry out. Cleverly, he managed to convince the boy in coming to a seminar for בעלי תשובה. After a few days, slowly, words of תורה מן השמים began to seep in. Slowly and slowly he became more and more inspired to *Yiddishkeit*. At the end of the seminar, they announced, “Whoever wants to change their lives come up to the podium and make a קבלה.”

He stood up, went to the microphone and he announced, "I've been so impressed during the last few days; I'm making a קבלה: I am going to break the engagement with this lady, I'm not seeing her again."

There and then, he took out his phone in front of everyone, dialled this girl's number and told her nicely it's no longer on, finished.

Everyone gave a big round-of-applause.

However, he's not leaving go of the podium; he was standing there - holding tight to the *shtender*. It was 12 o'clock at night and he exclaimed, "I'm not moving from the *shtender* until you enrol me into a בעל תשובה ישיבה."

At such a late hour, it was very difficult to get through to a בעל תשובה ישיבה. Nevertheless, this man wasn't moving, he was firm. Finally, they found a בעל תשובה ישיבה בעלז for בעלי תשובה who was prepared to pick him up.

When he arrived, he still wasn't getting off the podium.

He continued to say, "I'm not leaving until you fetch me all my belongings and possessions from my home. I'm not returning home myself."

Once they fetched his luggage, off he went to begin a new journey.

R' Yossi writes: He knew in his mind, if he would wait until tomorrow, if he would go home, nothing will come out of all this inspiration. He took the opportunity immediately without pushing it off.

When an inspiration comes, don't push it off. If you don't act on it immediately nothing will happen afterwards. Act on it straight away. On the spot write it down or accept a קבלה which will last. It's such a shame when a התעוררות gets lost so many times.

The (ע"ז י"ז.) tells us about ר' אליעזר בן דורדיא who travelled over many seas and used a bag of gold coins to do a certain עבירה. At the time of the עבירה he received a התעוררות. He ran away, crying to the mountains and heaven for help, until eventually realizing – אין הדבר תולה אלא בי –

He was so devastated that he cried himself to death. A בת קול came out saying, "Blessed is עולם הבא to זוכה ר' אליעזר בן דורדיא who is

"בכה רבי, יש שקונה עולמו בשעה אחת" – There are many explanations why רבי cried. One explanation is: רבי cried for all the people who get inspirations in their life and nothing

happens with it! Here ר' אליעזר revived an inspiration and used it immediately. "בכה רבי" because he saw that this person took his inspiration and was עולם הבא to זוכה.

When we make a קבלה and we are inspired, that same day you will receive a נסיון regarding the קבלה you just accepted.

In ט"ט אליהו הנביא, מלכים א' פרק י"ט was walking and he saw אלישע ploughing the field, and he threw his cloak over אלישע. The רד"ק explains, אליהו was indicating, "Come with me, stop ploughing and become my תלמיד."

אלישע understood, stopped ploughing and ran after אליהו. Immediately, אליהו said to אלישע, "Go back – why are you following me!"

What is going on? First אליהו calls him and now he's sending him back?

The רד"ק explains: אליהו told אלישע to return because he wanted to give him a נסיון!

ר' חיים קופמאן זצ"ל would explain: He wanted to give אלישע a נסיון straight away, because every time we make a קבלה to change – to turn over a new leaf, immediately a נסיון will come. we must be ready for it. Don't give up from that first נסיון.

If we make a החלטה and we are not נכשל in the first התעוררות we will be able to keep the inspiration forever.

There was a Jewish family in Birmingham who sent their son to a university in Manchester approximately 30 years ago. in university, other אידן, began to be מקרב him more to Yiddishkeit.

He was suggested along his travels to go visit the ראש ישיבה זצ"ל in Manchester. He was truly impressed by the ראש ישיבה and he slowly began keeping שבת and wearing תפילין etc. However, his father wasn't prepared to change.

The son one day managed to convince his father to visit the ראש ישיבה in Manchester, to at least see the face of the holy צדיק.

He came in and asked for a ברכה from the ראש ישיבה.

The ראש ישיבה asked, "Do you keep שבת?!"

"No... I do not keep שבת," replied the man.

"I can only give you a ברכה," said the ראש ישיבה, "if you promise you will keep שבת."

He thought about it for a moment and replied, "Yes... I will keep שבת."

On that שבת – for the first time in many years, he knew he couldn't turn on his television, drive his car, and so on.

That first שבת he woke up early morning to walk to shul. As he opened the front door, a police officer was about to ring on the bell. The officer exclaimed, "The estate where your office and warehouse is, is currently on fire. The fire is raging, spreading from building to building. Go quick and save what you can."

"I'm sorry," replied the man, "I cannot drive because it's שבת."

"Don't worry," replied the police officer, "I am going back there now, you can have a lift with me."

His son could see his father having a dilemma, debating whether to go or not.

"NO..." said the man, "I'm not going."

After שבת ה', שבת בחסדי ה' nothing too bad had actually happened.

Later his son asked his father, "Tell me father! You've been מחלל שבת for 55 years. Why couldn't you just start fresh next week?! One more time wouldn't make the difference!"

His father replied, "I was about to say 'yes', but an image of the ראש ישיבה appeared before me on top of the police officer."

We see again, after you accept on yourself an החלטה you are going to receive that same נסיון later that day! That is how the יצר הרע works. We must seize the moment when we can.

We must be ready for that stage. It's a shame to let it fall away.

On פורים, the בחורים of ראדין ישיבה were with the הפץ היים. One of the בחורים was a bit high, and he asked the הפץ היים to promise that he will sit next to the הפץ היים in גן עדן. After time the בחור would ask again and again, however, the הפץ היים would reply with his tremendous ענוה, "Who says have a place in גן עדן..."

It was getting late and eventually the הפץ היים had to go to the פורים סעודה. The בחור was a strong boy. He went and stood in the doorway and exclaimed, "Rebbe! You're not going to the סעודה until you promise me that I will sit next to you in גן עדן."

The הפץ היים replied, "מסתמא, I have a bit of גן עדן because I never spoke הרע in my life. If you promise to be מקבל the same thing, you can sit next to me in גן עדן."

The בחור's face cleared, debating whether to accept such a קבלה. After a few minutes went by, the חפץ חיים said to the other בחורים, "Take him away... he's missed his chance."

The חפץ חיים became annoyed. In that setting when the חפץ חיים promises you to sit next to him in גן עדן, true it's a difficult קבלה, however, if you will remind yourself of that setting when the חפץ חיים gives you such a promise, you will never again speak הרע לשון! He gave up the opportunity. He didn't react quick enough. He let the inspiration go away.

Constantly, we are receiving inspirations. Inspirations can change our lives. It can be a life changing decision. When we receive the inspirations, we must think of ways of harnessing them together with acting straight away without letting it go by.

Transcribed by אברהם דוב הכהן כהן - Avrohom Dov Kohn.

All mistakes, omissions and errors are mine.