

עֵפֶרֶת הַשָּׁבוּעַ

A Weekly Torah Publication from the Students of Mesivta Ateres Yaakov
Ruth & Hyman Simon High School

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This week's edition of
ATERES HASHAVUA
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Yishai Kadry

SURELY A SUNRISE

Avi Lieberman, 12th Grade

... אשר נתן לשכוי בינה להבחין בין יום ובין לילה [ברכת השחר]

.. WHO GAVE THE ROOSTER UNDERSTANDING TO
DISTINGUISH BETWEEN DAY AND NIGHT

Every morning we thank Hashem in the *Birchas HaShachar* for giving the rooster the perception to differentiate between night and day, thus knowing when to crow. This seems like a rather interesting *bracha* to begin with – what does the rooster's crowing have to do with us? Is there something deeper to the rooster that credits it with mention when we start off our day?

Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky *shlit"a* brings down the *Medrash* that explains, that compared to all the other animals, even while it is still dark the rooster is able to declare 'there will be a sunrise'. In the middle of the night while darkness reigns supreme, the rooster *knows* that sunrise will surely come and crows, thereby testifying to its firm belief. This is the example to follow as we begin our day; to know without a doubt that our 'sunrise' will come.

As we begin *Sefer Shemos*, it is interesting to note that the *parshiyos* which tell of the greatest pain and suffering the Jews went through in Egypt is call by Chazal the *Sefer HaGeulah*, the Book of Redemption. Should this title really take its place at the beginning of the *sefer* when we are describing all of our torment and affliction? Why not let this heading cover only the *parshiyos* that deal with our actual deliverance and redemption?

The answer is that just as the rooster knows, we also know, that even in the midst of the dark

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CAREFULLY SPOKEN

Yishai Kadry, 9th Grade

While Moshe killed the wicked Egyptian taskmaster in secret, loose tongues spread word of his deed far and wide. Rashi writes that Moshe considered this dangerous tendency to gossip a sufficient explanation for the terrible afflictions Israel suffered. [Shemos 2:14]

Later on, we learn that Moshe himself received instruction in careful speech. When Hashem told him to tell the Jews of their coming redemption, Moshe worryingly said, "They won't believe me, and they won't listen to me." Rashi explains that the next few statements of Hashem are meant to teach Moshe that someone who expresses unconfirmed suspicions is continuing the work of the serpent, and is worthy of punishment.

According to the Midrash [Shir HaShirim Rabba 1], similar words were spoken by Yishayahu who included himself among a "people of corrupted lips", and to Eliyahu who complained to Hashem that the Jews "have abandoned Your covenant".

These statements of our great Neviyim would normally be considered permitted speech. They were intended as accurate statements with a constructive purpose, said before One Who would certainly not misinterpret them. Yet the Midrash speaks of their "Loshon Hara," because a different standard is demanded when we stand before HaKadosh Baruch Hu. Every Jew stands before Hashem as a representative or supporter for the entire Jewish people and indeed all mankind. And the heavenly Judge, like an earthly one, pays attention to the claims brought in His court.

In terms of earthly judgment, we sometimes need to make harsh statements and even harsh

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Mazal Tov to
Rabbi & Rebbetzin
Nissan Gewirtzman
upon the wedding of
their daughter Leah
to Yaakov Kilberg

judgments in order to maintain order. This reality underlies certain leniencies in the laws of loshon hara.

But when it comes to heavenly judgment, Hashem wants each of us to view ourselves as a defense attorney - for our fellow man. Think of the great efforts a skilled attorney makes to defend his client. He gives the facts and the law alike to show his client's innocence. If his client is still convicted of being guilty, he requests justifying circumstances and presses for a lenient sentence.

This is how Hashem wants us to present our fellow Jews in His court. We should think of how the facts and the law could help to the credit of sinners, and recommend justifying circumstances which may get a milder punishment for that person.

Moshe was a persistent pleader on behalf of the Jewish people. His unique level in compassion was comparable to his unique level in prophecy. Hashem calls us to follow Moshe's example.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

Reb Aharon Rokeach, the Belzer Rav and his brother, Reb Mordechai, were smuggled out of the Bochnia ghetto in May 1943. In charge of the rescue operation was a Hungarian officer who was being well paid for his services.

According to his plan, the high-ranking Hungarian officer would be traveling from Hungary in the service of the Hungarian army. His "mission" would be to bring back from Poland two prominent generals who were captured on the eastern front. These two "generals" being brought back for interrogation would be the Belzer Rav and his brother.

The Hungarian office made all the arrangements at various check points in Poland and Hungary. All the forged documents were in order. Different license plates were prepared for various different check points. The only problem was he forgot to bring along two sets of Russian uniforms for the "generals", but by the time he realized it was too late to go back, and he decided to go through with the plan anyway.



The present Belzer Rebbe *shlita* in Eretz Yisroel

With the two generals in his back seat he passed the first checkpoint successfully. As he passed the next few checkpoints his confidence grew. At one point in the journey he decided to stop for a few drinks. When he came out of the bar he could not find the car. He searched frantically only to discover that the car was exactly where he left it but was covered in a heavy mist as if to conceal it from eyes that were not supposed to see it. He then realized that every thing he heard about his two passengers was true.

Finally they reached the Hungarian border - the final step on their journey. At the first major checkpoint in Hungary they presented the necessary papers, but were not allowed to pass. The officer claimed that he did not receive orders about two Russian generals and therefore could not let them through. "Check with your superior" the Hungarian officer suggested in a commanding voice. Moments later the superior appeared, apologized for the inconvenience - but would not let them through. It seemed hopeless. Yet suddenly out of the mist appeared three Hungarian generals mounted on horseback. They ordered the

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torment the sun will rise, and we will eventually be redeemed. Everything is being set as we prepare for our deliverance from the present suffering. As we read along in the Parshas HaShavua, we ourselves know of the final outcome and are following along with the concept of, "להגיד בבקר חסדך, to relate Your kindness in the dawn." Meaning, we know what will eventually happen and can 'relate Hashem's kindness' with certainty.

Yet we in our own times are living through everything with the latter half of the *pasuk*, "ואמונתך, בבליית, and Your faith in the night." Since we are

unsure of our surroundings and final outcome, we cannot knowingly relate Hashem's kindness, but must rather rely on our 'faith' as we are in the darkness of 'the night'.

It is now that we must follow the example of the rooster and declare, 'There will be a sunrise!' In the midst of the darkness, the rooster teaches us that we must have a firm faith that can make us an example for all to follow when it comes to having the proper *emunah* in the final redemption. Let our firm belief and conviction in the *geulah sheleimah* lead us to that final pinnacle, speedily in our day.

RABBI MORDECHAI GIFTER ZT'L 7 Cheshvan, 5676 / October 15, 1915 – 24 Teves 5761 / January 18, 2001 *Part III*

- When his uncle, Rav Eliyahu Meir Bloch passed away, Rav Gifter was appointed rosh yeshiva along with his dear friend Rav Boruch Sorotzkin zt'l.

- For many years, Rav Gifter delivered *shiurim* to thousands of talmidim. In his will, he requested that no praise be accorded to him, other than, "I merited to study Torah and to produce students who are outstanding in Torah and *yiroh*, not in accordance with my deeds."

- In 5736 (1975) when he was 60 years old, Rav Gifter moved to Eretz Yisroel and founded the Telz Yeshiva in Kiryat Telz-Stone near Jerusalem, along with a group of his own talmidim and talmidim of the Chevron Yeshiva.

- In the yeshiva in Eretz Yisroel, Rav Gifter gave daily *shiurim* on the *daf gemora* and a Friday *shiur* on *Minchas Chinuch*, which was attended by some of Yerushalayim's greatest *talmidei chachomim*.

- Three years later as the yeshiva was advancing, Rav Baruch Sorotzkin, Rosh Yeshiva of Telz in Cleveland, suddenly passed away. At the directive of the Steipler Rav, he closed the yeshiva in Telz-Stone and returned to the United States in order to lead the Cleveland yeshiva.

- When Rav Gifter returned to Cleveland, he was filled with a longing for Eretz Yisroel, and moved with his family into an apartment in the yeshiva dormitory, in order to conduct himself as in *galus* (exile).

- He began delivering *shiurim* to the Cleveland talmidim, as well as a *shiur* in *Minchas Chinuch*. His connection to his talmidim was a quality known throughout the entire Torah world, as he merited to produce scores of budding *talmidei chachomim*. All of his talmidim's lives were greatly influenced by their beloved Rav Gifter, who imbued within them the Torah which he had received from his illustrious mentors.

- Rav Gifter published numerous pieces and many *seforim* on all aspects of Torah, including *emunah* and halacha. He also put out *Petitei*



Minchah on *Minchas Chinuch*, which is learned and highly praised by the *gedolim* of our times.

- His *seforim* on *mussar*, *emunah*, *middos* and *avodas Hashem* are basic *sefarim* for every *ben Torah* wishing to grow spiritually.

- Throughout the past fifty years he was one of the heads of the Moetzes Gedolei HaTorah in the United States, and graced all of the Agudas Yisroel conventions in the United States with his presence, where his speech was the main address.

- In his *derashos*, Rav Gifter always quoted his rabbeim, and

spoke with the reflection of a pure heart who gave his life for the sake of Klal Yisroel.

- He held a strong bond with HaRav Eliezer Menachem Shach zt'l, who he regarded as the *manhig hador*. Rav Shach held the same affection for Rav Gifter and always met with him when he came to Eretz Yisroel.

- Towards the end of his life he became weak, as yeshivos throughout the world davened for his recovery. However, on a Thursday night in Teves, Rabbi Mordechai Gifter passed away. At the time of his *petirah* he was surrounded by his family and a *minyán* of students.

- *Levayos* were held for Rav Gifter in the Telz yeshiva in Cleveland, Yeshiva Darchei Torah in Far Rockaway NY, and in the airport in Eretz Yisroel, with the final one being in the Mir Yeshiva. The *hespedim* delivered in Yeshiva Darchei Torah were transmitted to ninety-two centers in the United States, South Africa and Australia.

- Rav Gifter left behind an illustrious family, all *talmidei chachomim* in their own right. His sons are Rav Binyomin, Rav Zalman and Rav Yisroel. His sons-in-law are Rav Ephraim Eisenberg, Rav Avrohom Chaim Feuer, and Rav Yaakov Reisman.

- Besides his family, Rav Gifter left behind thousands of *talmidei chachomim* who were all very close to him, and now have the ability to spread his love and words of Torah to the masses.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM (continued from page 2)

border guards - both the junior and the superior - to let the captive generals through. As the car crossed the border the three mounted Hungarian Generals saluted the two "generals" in the car. Once more the car was on its way to freedom.

The Hungarian officer was bewildered. "I know all the high officers in the Hungarian army, but I must frankly admit to you that I did not recognize the three high ranking military men who came to our rescue at the border."

"We did," responded Reb Mordechai. They were our father, Reb Yissachar Dov Ber, our grandfather, Reb Yehoshua, and our great grandfather, Reb Shalom; all top ranking generals in Hakodosh Baruch Hu's army.

אמת ליעקב

Weekly Insights from Moreinu HoRav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l

ויאמר אל עמו הנה עם בני ישראל רב ועצום ממנו וא:ט

AND HE SAID TO HIS NATION, "BEHOLD THE BNEI YISROEL ARE GREATER AND MORE PRESTIGIOUS THAN US."

HaRav Yaakov Kamenetzky zt"l explains that in essence, Pharaoh's reasoning was very understandable. At this point in time, all of *Mitzrayim* was owned by Pharaoh, and all the people had to pay a tax of one fifth to his treasury, as this was what Yosef had established as the law during the



Reb Aharon Kotler zt"l (speaking) and
Reb Yaakov at an Agudath Yisroel Dinner

years of famine. However, Yosef had arranged for Bnei Yisroel to be exempt from these laws. As such, when Pharaoh looked at Bnei Yisroel, he saw one select group that was totally free from any obligations to the government. He set out to correct this wrong by forcing Bnei Yisroel to be as enslaved to him as the rest of the country. After time, other decrees were added that turned the enslavement of Bnei Yisroel into the harsh servitude that it was. This made the *Mitzriyim* deserving of their punishment, despite the fact that Pharaoh's original intention was just to force Bnei Yisroel to pay the tax.

We see that Pharaoh's *rishus* was not in his reasoning, but rather in his lack of *midos tovos*. Had Pharaoh thought it through, he would have realized that if not for Yosef, *Mitzrayim* would never have become the economic power that it was. It was only due to Yosef's interpretation of the dreams, and his subsequent advice and planning for the years of famine that allowed *Mitzrayim* to survive. As such, common gratitude dictated that Yosef's family be exempt from the taxes that he himself instituted. However, Pharaoh did not feel any sense of appreciation to Yosef and his family. Pharaoh's true wickedness stemmed from the deficiency of his *midos*.

Pharaoh posed the question of his obligation to Yosef's family to his three advisors; Bilam, Iyov, and Yisro. Bilam agreed that Pharaoh had no obligation to Yosef's family, and Iyov through his silence agreed as well. Both of them were lacking in their *midah* of *hakoras hatov*. Yisro on the other hand had an ingrained sense of obligation to those that had helped him. When Yisro's daughters told him that Moshe had helped them draw water for their sheep, he immediately went out and invited him home, in order to show his appreciation. Yisro had a deep rooted sense of *hakoras hatov* that did not allow him to accept Pharaoh's decree. For this he was rewarded with the tremendous *zechus* of becoming the father-in-law of Moshe Rabeinu.

A young married *talmid chacham* once spent a long time with the Steipler Gaon, seeking deeper guidance in his learning. As the young man expressed his thanks and turned to leave, the Steipler said, "Do not forget to help out in the house. I see that you are a true *ben Torah* and a *masmid*; but it is important to give proper attention to one's family. When you go home now, ask your wife if she needs your help."

The young man replied, "My wife possess true *yiras shomayim*, and she wants with all her heart that I should devote myself to learning Torah." "That is her *mitzvah*," countered the Steipler; "your *mitzvah* is to help her."

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