

When asked for information that you might not have, gather the courage to admit ignorance. Push the words past your lips: "I don't know." It's not so hard. After doing it a few times, it will become easier. As a bonus, you will start to accumulate a vast array of data from others that will turn you into someone who is "in the know!" (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

The Good Earth

"Soil is an especially interesting material. It is composed of many substances, and the purpose of this composite substance is to produce food, clothing, and shelter for mankind. Its vegetation serves to produce food or produce clothing from plants such as flax and cotton. The vegetation is also a source of wood that may be used for baking in stoves, heating in our houses, or building homes. Homes may be built with bricks that are produced from clay that the soil provides. This, the soil with its earth is blessed is like a storehouse of all good things".

Hashem created man from the soil, to teach us that inside of man is a storehouse of endless creativity for mankind. At the same time, He must have humility like the soil. Humility demonstrates gratitude and appreciation to Hashem for man's endless creativity. (Norman D. Levy - based on Rabbi Miller, Duties of the Heart)

Healing Process

For years Rabbi Dovid Gibbler has prayed in the Tarnopol shul in Kensington, Brooklyn. He knew that Aaron Zisel Weichbrod had not been well, but he didn't know many details. Rabbi Gibbler noticed, though, that Mr. Weichbrod always prayed with great intensity.

One day, Rabbi Gibbler said to him, "I am inspired by the way you pray, It's nice to see people who take *tefillah* seriously."

"Thank you," replied Mr. Weichbrod. "But I want you to know that though *tefillah* is invaluable, when someone learns Torah, it is the most wonderful thing. It brings *yeshuot venechamot* (salvation and consolations)."

Rabbi Gibbler is a *maggid shiur*, so he understands the value of Torah study. But it seemed to him that Mr. Weichbrod was referring to something more specific.

What do you mean?" asked Rabbi Gibbler.

"I have been suffering for a long time with colitis and ileitis," came the reply. "It got to the point where I needed constant iron transfusions because my blood count was low and I was losing so much blood. A few months ago, on a Shabbat morning, I was saying the verse, 'Torat Hashem temimah meshivat nefesh – The Torah of Hashem is perfect, restoring the soul (Tehillim 19:8).' Suddenly it occurred to me that the Torah teaches us, *ki hadam hu hanefesh*, for the blood, it is the life (Debarim 12:23). It dawned on me that perhaps, to improve my blood situation, I should increase the amount of Torah that I learn. Man's blood is called *nefesh*, life, and David Hamelech wrote that Torah restores the *nefesh*, so I decided to increase my daily learning time by five minutes a day. I started that thirteen months ago, and *Baruch Hashem*, since then I have not needed a single iron or blood transfusion!" (In the Splendor of the Maggid)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition
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SHABBAT

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Haftarah: Shoftim 5:1-31

JANUARY 26-27, 2018 11 SHEBAT 5778

Friday Minhah: 4:49 pm

Candlelighting: 4:49 pm

Evening Shema after: 5:47 pm

Shaharit: 8:30 am

Morning Shema by: 9:05 am

Shabbat Class: 3:30 pm

Shabbat Minhah: 4:30 pm

Shabbat Ends: 5:48 pm (R"Y 6:20 pm)

Sunday Minhah: 4:55 pm

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Weather permitting, *Bircat Halebanah* will be recited on Saturday night. If not, it may be said until Tuesday night, January 30.

Tu Bishvat will be celebrated on Wednesday, January 31.

Mabrook to Avi & Adena Salem on the birth of a baby girl. Mabrook to the grandparents, Mark & Aileen Mizrahi.

Mabrook to Natan & Racquel Tellio on the engagement of their daughter, Eugenia, to Nissim Lavi.

Condolences to Rabbi Mordechai Dabbah on the passing of his father.

A Message from Our Rabbi

"כָּל־הַמַּחֲלָה אֲשֶׁר־שַׁמְתִּי בְּמִצְרַיִם לֹא־אֶשִׂים עָלֶיךָ כִּי אֶנִּי ה' רִפְּאֵהְךָ"
 "All the sickness that I placed on Egypt I shall not place on you for I am Hashem your healer." (Shemot 15:26)

The *Hatam Sofer* explains that there are two types of doctors: 1) a doctor who comes whenever someone is sick, and is paid for each visit (this was in the days that doctors made house calls), 2) a "house doctor" who is always on call, and receives a set fee for his services regardless of how many visits he makes. The difference between

the two doctors is that the first one benefits more when the patient is sick, while the second one prefers to see the patient healthy.

This is what Hashem said (as explained in *Torah Ladaat*): Since I am your regular Healer, I would rather keep you healthy. Therefore, you must hearken to My voice and observe My commandments, and you will be spared the sickness with which I afflicted the Egyptians. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

Did You See That?

Even after all of the miracles that happened on behalf of the Jews while they were still in Egypt, what happened at the crossing of the sea was that much greater. In the Passover Haggadah, we compare the plagues which afflicted the Egyptians in Egypt to what happened to them at the sea. We read that what happened at the sea is referred to as the "Hand of G-d," while in Egypt it was merely the "Finger of God." So whatever happened in Egypt, at the sea it was five times greater.

And our Sages say that this was not mere exaggeration. They point out that each plague had many different facets, such that each one could be considered to be four or five plagues. And then they repeat, whatever happened at the sea was five times greater: if there were forty plagues in Egypt, there were 200 at the sea. If there were fifty in Egypt, there were 250 at the sea!

And all of the above is only discussing what happened to the Egyptians, a small part of the story. The sea *split*. The *Midrash* says that water in a glass split, so everyone knew a miracle was occurring at that moment. The water of the sea actually split into different channels, one per tribe. The water rose like a wall on each side, and the ground in front upon which the Jews walked through was completely dry. So the whole experience was one miracle after the next.

The *Midrash* says that this was the greatest revelation in history of G-d's Hand at work. The *Mechilta* quotes Rabbi Eliezer, "A maidservant saw at the sea what Yeshayahu (Isaiah) and Yechezkel (Ezekiel) did not see." The prophets had visions, similar to dreams. But what Israel saw at the sea, they saw with their own eyes. It doesn't make this comparison regarding the Revelation at Sinai, because in that case there were far fewer *physical* manifestations of G-d's Hand at work.

So we must ask: how is it that everyone saw these tremendous miracles, greater visions than those of Isaiah and Ezekiel, yet they did not all become prophets? Why did they remain at a lower spiritual level?

The answer, though, is sort of obvious: it's not just what you are privileged to see, but what you *learn*. It's what you take away from the event. The reason why Yeshayahu and Yechezkel became prophets is that they looked for the handiwork of G-d in every small thing that happened, and analyzed each event to see what they could learn. They pursued knowledge throughout their days. And that's why they were ready to reach that level, to have those visions.

Israel in Egypt, by contrast, had been downtrodden, and had descended to a very low spiritual level. They were not used to looking for the Hand of G-d in every event. Many had lost hope that they would be redeemed at all. And so they were not ready to ascend to massive spiritual heights, despite everything they saw at the sea.

Throughout our lives, we are offered both small and large opportunities to learn and to grow. Spirituality, like any physical or mental activity, is an area in which we can grow and develop -- through practice. We cannot sit around waiting for a great moment of revelation, as we may not be prepared to learn from it when it comes. If we

learn to take inspiration from each little event in our lives, that is the way we grow to spiritual heights! (Rabbi Yaakov Menken)

True Humility

”בְּשִׁמְעַע ה' אֶת־תְּלִנְתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם מְלִינִם עָלָיו וְנִחְנוּ מֶה לֹא־עָלִינוּ
תְּלִנְתֵיכֶם כִּי עָלִיהָ”

“Hashem will have heard your complaints, that you cause complaints against Him. What are we? Your complaints are not against us, but against Hashem.” (*Shemot* 16:8)

The *Gemara* (*Hulin* 89) writes: “The entire world exists only on account of Moshe and Aharon who said, ‘*V’nahnu mah* – and what are we?’” Their tremendous humility is what keeps the world going. But were they the only humble ones? What about David *Hamelech*, who was renowned for his humbleness, or Abraham *Abinu*, who said, “*V’anochi afar v’efer* – I am but dust and ashes.” Are they any less worthy?

This *pasuk* calls to mind a poignant episode that occurred in the *Bet Midrash* of the great R’ Yonatan Eibeschutz zt”l of Prague. During the Yom Kippur prayers, R’ Yonatan noticed a man seated nearby, praying with deep emotion: “I am mere dust during my lifetime, how much more so after my death.” Before long, however, during the reading of the Torah, the Rav observed this same person in a heated argument with the *gabai*, demanding the honor of being called to the Torah.

Flushed with anger, the man exclaimed, “Do you realize who I am and the important office I hold?”

R’ Yonatan interjected. “Excuse me, but just a short time ago, you yourself said you were as dust!”

The man replied, “True, indeed. Compared to the *Ribbono Shel Olam*, I am nothing but dust, but compared to this *gabai*...I am so much more!”

It is this arrogant attitude that prompted *Hazal* to state that the utterance of Moshe *Rabenu* and Aharon *HaKohen* is superior even to that of Abraham *Abinu*, for when Abraham said, “I am but dust and ashes,” he was addressing Hashem, whereas Moshe and Aharon’s self-effacement was so pervasive, that they said, “And what are we,” considering themselves as naught even compared to those who murmured and complained against Hashem. (*Torah Tavlin*)

I Don't Know

Many situations can render people speechless. A confrontation with an important person, a frightening situation, or a set of unexpected circumstances can leave even individuals who are otherwise very talkative, dumbfounded.

Three of the hardest words for people to get out of their mouths are “I don’t know.” Many people feel that they must know everything about everything and give some answer – any answer, even an incorrect one – in order to avoid being classified as stupid by their friends and associates.

The urge to respond in order to cover ignorance can send people miles out of their way with incorrect travel directions. It can, unfortunately, even result in serious health complications when the perpetrator is a doctor who doesn’t know something but gives an answer anyway to a trusting patient.

Our Sages teach that you should train your tongue to say, “I don’t know.” It prevents you from placing a “stumbling block before the blind.” It also gives you the

opportunity to learn and grow if you are one of those courageous souls who can admit to a lack of understanding.