

guidelines. Once one has fulfilled his nutritional needs, the remaining “hunger” is only the animal desire to eat, which should be controlled. The special *berachah* in *Eress Yisrael* will be that as soon as one has eaten enough to meet his nutritional needs, he will feel completely satisfied. (Rav Schwab on *Chumash*)

Ooops!

Whenever people make a mistake, their reaction is usually a mental slap, as if to say, “How could I be so stupid?” It doesn’t really matter if the error was a minor faux pas or an expensive business miscalculation; critical self-assessment usually follows. This natural tendency to self-castigate – painful as it may be – can be beneficial to those skilled in the art of constructive self-criticism.

Personal growth results from a trial-and-error lifestyle. You make an attempt to do something you have never tried before. Sometimes the attempt is successful and sometimes not – but every try provides an opportunity to learn. Once you have mastered the art of analyzing errors, you can learn much less painfully and more cheaply from the mistakes of others.

When you do the inevitable, and err, first look beyond the event to its cause. Then gaze beyond the cause to the lesson of the event. It only takes a minute to convert a mistake into a lesson, one you can use time and again for success.

Remember, the mother of success is...failure! (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Loyal Son

Yeruchem Pitter was raised in a warm, loving, traditional Jewish family in Denver, Colorado. Since at the time there were no established local Hebrew day schools, Mr. and Mrs. Pitter sent Yeruchem to public school and to the Hebrew school several afternoons a week. Rabbi Hakohen, one of the teachers in Hebrew school, particularly inspired Yeruchem by making Jewish learning enjoyable.

When Yeruchem was eleven, he delivered a wonderful *D'bar Torah* at the Shabbat table. His father jokingly remarked, “Maybe one day you’ll go far away to *yeshivah* to become a Rabbi.” At age twelve, Yeruchem decided to do just that! His parents had no concept of the dramatic change Yeruchem was about to make in his life, yet, to their credit, they were supportive of his decision and encouraged him to fulfill his dream.

There was much hugging and crying at the airport as Mr. and Mrs. Pitter sent their young son to *yeshivah* in Chicago. They made but one request of him: They asked Yeruchem to write to them every single day. Yeruchem dutifully agreed.

Many years later, R’ Yeruchem returned to Denver to sit *shiva* for his father. As his friends and acquaintances sat around him, R’ Yeruchem reminisced about his early years growing up in Denver. He recalled the tearful goodbye with his parents at the airport as well as his promise to write them every day.

One of Yeruchem’s friends asked, “Surely you were not able to keep that promise. How often did you write your parents?”

Without a moment’s hesitation, R’ Yeruchem answered, “As a matter of fact, I have written to my parents every day for the past forty-three years.” He pulled a postcard out of his pocket and said, “I was to mail this to my father on the day he passed away.”

R’ Yeruchem still mails his mother a letter every day. Not only is he a dedicated son who truly observes the commandment of honoring one’s parents, he is also the *Mashgiah* of the *Mesivta* of Long Beach, where he has lovingly guided thousands of boys throughout the years. (For Goodness’ Sake)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition
 װ"ןηfװχ, X װ♦τκ, ♦v♣α↔°β ηYκηγκ

Congregation Magen Abraham

479 Monmouth Road - P.O. Box 444
 West Long Branch, New Jersey 07764
 (732) 870-2225



SHABBAT HUKAT ☆, ♥E♠φ, X♥↑

Haftarah: Shoftim 11:1-33

JUNE 30-JULY 1, 2017 7 TAMUZ 5777

Fri. Shir Hashirim/Minhah: **6:30, 7:00, 7:30 pm** Shaharit: **4:32, 6:40, 8:30, 9:15 am**
 Candlelighting: **8:12 pm** Morning Shema by: **8:16 am**
 Evening Shema after: **9:10 pm** Shabbat Class: **6:40 pm**
 Shabbat Minhah: **7:50 pm**
 Shabbat Ends: **9:10 pm (R"Y 9:42)**
 Sunday Minhah: **7:05 pm**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Weather permitting, *Bircat Halebanah* will be said on Saturday night. If not, it may be said until Friday night, July 7.

Mabrook to Rabbi & Mrs. Yosef Semah on the birth of a baby boy. Mabrook to the grandparents, Rabbi & Mrs. Reuven Semah.

Mabrook to Adam & Raquel Pahuskin on the birth of a baby boy. Mabrook to the grandparents, Bette & Michael Pahuskin.

Condolences to Andre and Rene Rofe on the passing of their mother, Rachel bat Miriam.

A Message from Our Rabbi

"וְתָמַת שָׁם מִרְיָם וְתִקְבָּר שָׁם וְלֹא־הָיָה מַיִם לְעֵדָה"

“Miriam died there and was buried there. There was no water for the people.” (Bamidbar 20:1-2)

The Torah puts the death of Miriam next to the fact that the Israelites lacked water in the desert to teach us that the Jews received water from a well for forty years in the merit of Miriam. What did Miriam do to merit this great miracle? The *Zohar* says that Miriam’s reward came from her standing at the side of the Nile River to ensure her baby brother, Moshe, who was placed in a basket in the river, was saved.

Miriam can be contrasted with another woman who lived at that time, Batya, the daughter of Pharaoh. Batya was actually the one who saved Moshe from the Nile. Then, she raised Moshe as her own son in the palace of Pharaoh. Batya also merited to name Moshe. Moshe had many names; the Torah uses the name that Batya gave him.

Rabbi Noah Weinberg zt”l asks: who did a greater act, Miriam, who waited by the water’s edge, or Batya, who plucked Moshe from the water and raised him? Clearly, saving Moshe’s life was a much greater act, with more far-reaching consequences, than

merely standing by and waiting to see how he was going to be saved. Why, then, did Miriam's act merit a far superior reward?

The Torah is showing us that the intention defines the act. Batya saw a child and saved him. She had no inkling who this child was destined to become. All she knew was that she saved a Jewish child from being swept away by the river. That act turned her into Moshe's surrogate mother, and she merited naming him.

Miriam was not merely watching a Jewish child. She was a prophetess and she knew that Moshe was destined to be the redeemer who would take the Jewish People out of Egypt. She was waiting to see what would happen to the future leader of the Jewish People. Batya was acting on behalf of one child, but Miriam was acting to ensure the survival of the entire nation. Miriam's intention transformed her deed into a greater act than Batya's, and this is why the nation was supplied with water in her merit.

We need to examine the intent underlying our actions because our intent defines the action. This is especially relevant in the realm of prayer. When you pray, instead of praying only for yourself, broaden your vision and have in mind the entire Jewish People. Pray for everyone you know, for every Jew across the globe. Pray that Hashem give us understanding, return us to His Torah, and forgive us. When we have other people in mind and think about the whole Jewish People, it is a very different quality of prayer. It is our intent that defines our prayers. We can limit our prayers to ourselves or we can use the same words with a more expansive intent and pray for all Jews. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

A Miniscule Sin – A Great Merit

”קח אֶת־הַמָּטָה וְהִקְהֵל אֶת־הָעֵדָה אֹתָהּ וְאַהֲרֹן אָחִיד וְדַבַּרְתָּם אֶל־הַסֵּלַע לְעֵינֵיהֶם וְנָתַן מִיָּמִיו וְהוֹצֵאתָ לָהֶם מִים מִן־הַסֵּלַע וְהִשְׁקִיתָ אֶת־הָעֵדָה וְאֶת־בְּעִירָם”

“Take the staff and assemble the community, you and Aharon your brother, and speak to the rock in their presence that it may give forth its water; you will then bring forth for them water from the rock and give drink to the community and their livestock.” (Bemidbar 20:8)

Commentaries have struggled to understand in what way Moshe sinned at *Mei Meribah*. The common denominator among all their explanation is that for a person of Moshe's stature, even the most miniscule flaw is considered a fault.

How do we reconcile this principle with the *Mishnah* in *Abot* (5:21), “A person who works for the benefit of the masses, no sin will come through him.” How is it possible that Moshe, who dedicated his whole life to the benefit of the masses, stumbled in sin?

Let's review the story. Hashem commanded Moshe, “You will bring forth for them water from the rock, and give drink to the community and their livestock.” Moshe understood this to mean that the Jews were not to take the water by themselves; rather, they were to be given to drink, like a *sotah* is compelled to drink the bitter water. Similarly, when the Jews sinned with the Golden Calf, the Torah says (*Shemot* 32:20), “He took the calf that they had made and burned it in fire; he ground it to a fine powder and sprinkled it over the water; and he made *B'nei Yisrael* drink.” Both with regard to the *sotah* and to the Jews at the time of the Golden Calf, the water distinguished between the righteous person and the sinner. Moshe understood that here, too, the water was to distinguish between them; between those who would serve Hashem unquestioningly, before they embark on a new life in *Eress Yisrael*, with obedience and love – the *sadikim* – and those who would continue to complain against Him.

Hashem told Moshe, “Give drink to the community and their livestock.” The word *ve'et* serves as a separation between the congregation, who were to be forced to drink to determine whether they were innocent or guilty, and the animals, which would drink of their own volition, in order to quench their thirst.

However, Moshe, the “trusted shepherd of Israel,” knew that all of those who were destined to perish in the desert had already died, and he did not want any more deaths among *Klal Yisrael* to be brought about through him. He was prepared to give up his life for his flock. He knew that if he transgressed G-d's command and hit the rock, the water would flow freely and *B'nei Yisrael* would drink on their own. Hence, the *pasuk* continues (*Bemidbar* 20:11), “Abundant waters came forth and the community and their livestock drank” – by themselves, with no distinction between the drinking of man and animal.

In view of this, we can understand why Moshe said to *Klal Yisrael* when he rebuked them (*Debarim* 1:37), “Hashem was angered at me *because of you*” – because of what I did for you. In other words, Moshe's motive for violating Hashem's command was *B'nei Yisrael's* welfare; Moshe did not want any more members of *Klal Yisrael* to die; he hoped that they would all merit to enter *Eress Yisrael*. Therefore, due to his concern for *B'nei Yisrael*, Moshe disobeyed, causing Hashem's anger at him and His decree that Moshe would not enter *Eress Yisrael*. (Rav Schwab on *Chumash*)

Physical vs. Spirit

”לָמָּה הִעָלִיתֵנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם לָמוּת בַּמִּדְבָּר כִּי אֵין לָהֶם וְאֵין מַיִם וְנִפְשָׁנוּ קָצָה בְּלֶחֶם הַקָּלָקָל”

“Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no food and no water, and we are disgusted with this rotten bread.” (*Bemidbar* 21:5)

Why, now after nearly forty years of subsisting on the *mann*, did *B'nei Yisrael* complain about it?

The answer may be that now, for the first time in almost forty years, the Jews had tasted real food that they had bought from the Edomites. The Torah states (*Debarim* 2:6), “You shall purchase food from them [the Edomites] for money so that you may eat; also water shall you buy from them for money so that you may drink.” Evidently, *B'nei Yisrael* began to consume bread and water even before they entered *Eress Yisrael*, and once they tasted natural food, miraculous food from the Heavens no longer appealed to them.

People who indulge in physical pleasures will find difficulty in enjoying that which is purely spiritual. Spiritual pleasure is inversely proportional to the pleasure one derives from the physical world.

“*Ve'achalta vesaba'ta* – you will eat and be satisfied.” We all have animal desires, and the most powerful is the desire to satiate one's hunger. However, *Rashi*, quoting from *Hazal*, tells us that “This is an additional gift, that a blessing will exist in the bread within the intestines; the food will be so richly endowed with the blessings of Hashem that one will eat only a little and yet be satisfied.”

The *Rambam* (*Hilchot De'ot* 4:2) warns one to use moderation in eating and not to eat to satiation. He advises that one should leave about one-quarter of his intestinal capacity unfilled. Today, many people are health conscious, and they follow similar