

Confidence is a State of Mind

If you trust in Hashem in business matters, you will have confidence in achieving success. If you are trusting in Hashem regarding your health, you will have confidence in health matters. In either case, you must still exert yourself to achieve the desired outcome."

Trusting ourselves and Hashem's involvement in our lives, will teach us that Confidence is a State of Mind. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller's teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)

What's for Supper?

Shabbat had come to an end. R' Ezra Hamway's wife turned to her husband and asked him what he would like for the *melaveh malkah* meal.

R' Ezra thought for a moment. "I would very much like *megedre* and some leben (a yogurt-like food)."

"*Megedre*? *Leben*? But you know we cannot afford such a delicacy!"

R' Ezra, who was known for his sense of humor, laughed. "I didn't expect you to make it. You asked what I wanted, so I told you!"

Their conversation was interrupted by a knock. The Jewish maidservant of a wealthy man walked in. She had a question of *halachah* for the *Hacham*.

Seeing that the girl was shy and uncomfortable, R' Ezra spoke to her kindly and tried to put her at ease. Finally the story came out. She had been preparing the *melaveh malkah* meal and had accidentally put leben onto a meat plate next to the hot *megedre*. Was the plate now kosher or not? And what about the dish she'd been preparing – did it have to be thrown out or could it be eaten?

R' Ezra questioned her closely. When had the plate last been used and what had been put on it? What material was it made of? What ingredients had gone onto the plate? What pot was used to cook the *megedre*? Finally, he gave his answer: the food could be eaten. The maid thanked R' Ezra and went back to her master's home.

R' Ezra turned back to the question of what his wife should prepare for the meal. Again, though, a knock interrupted their conversation. It was the maidservant at the door once again. She looked anxious and embarrassed as she explained her problem.

"My master, you see, thinks that the only reason you said the food could be eaten was because you didn't want me to lose my job. But he's afraid that it really may not be eaten."

R' Ezra looked at her sternly. "Of course that's not true. I would never declare something that is unkosher to be kosher!"

The girl gathered up all her courage. "My master said...he said he would only accept the *Hacham's* ruling if the *Hacham* were to eat of the dish himself, then he would believe that it was absolutely kosher."

Instead of being angry at the brazen request, R' Ezra merely nodded. If eating something meant he could help this young Jew, he was certainly prepared to do it.

"Yes, my child, you may bring me back a bowl of what you made and tell your master I will have it for my *se'udah rev'i*."

As the relieved maidservant left the house, R' Ezra's wife turned to him. "What, exactly, did she cook that we will now be enjoying?"

He smiled. "As a matter of fact, it is something very good. *Megedre* and leben." (Stories of Spirit and Faith)

The Lorraine Gammal A"H Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשִׁמַּת לָאָה בֵּת בְּהִיָּה

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SHABBAT KITABO ☆ שַׁבָּת כִּי־תִבְרָא

Haftarah: Yeshayahu 60:1-22

AUGUST 27-28, 2021 20 ELUL 5781

Early Shir Hashirim/Minhah: 5:50 pm

Shir Hashirim/Minhah: 7:00 pm

Late Shir Hashirim/Minhah: 7:15 pm

Candlelighting: 7:17 pm

Evening Shema after: 8:15 pm

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Shaharit: 5:20, 6:45, 7:30, 8:25, 9:15 am

Morning Shema by: 8:48 am

Shabbat Class: 5:55 pm

Shabbat Minhah: 1:30 & 6:55 pm

Shabbat Ends: 8:13 pm (R"Y 8:45 pm)

Weekday Minhah: 6:45 & 7:10 pm

This bulletin is dedicated by Ralph Hazan and family
in memory of Leon Hazan לְעִילּוֹי נְשִׁמַּת אֲלֵיהֶוּ בֶן סֵלֶחָה

This bulletin is dedicated by the Betesh family
in loving memory of Nat Betesh לְעִילּוֹי נְשִׁמַּת נָתָן בֶּן שָׁרָה

Mabrook to Ricky & Sarah Greenberg on the engagement of their daughter, Janie, to Abe Tawil.

Condolences to Mrs. Elana Abadi on the passing of her mother.

A Message from our Rabbi

אֲנִי לְדוּדִי וְדוּדִי לִי

"I alone am my beloved's and my beloved is mine" (Shir Hashirim 6:3)

We are now half way through the month of *Elul*. Rosh Hashanah is right around the corner. On these days, we strive to improve ourselves. Although changing one's character might appear to be a major task, and sometimes quite a formidable one, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev reduced it to a simple formula.

"Not much has changed in the world," Rabbi Levi Yitzchak said. "People have always told the truth and people have always lied. The only difference is one of place."

"In past days, people used to be pious and observant. They dealt honestly in business and were truthful in relating to others. When they came into shul and confessed, 'I have sinned, I have cheated, I have stolen,' they were lying. In other words, they were truthful in the street and they lied in shul.

"Today people are dishonest in business and lie to one another. When they say

confession in prayer, they are therefore telling the truth. Thus they lie in the street and are truthful in shul.

“All that is necessary is simply to restore the truth and lying to their original location,” Rabbi Levi Yitzchak concluded. “That should not be too difficult.”

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Cursed Be the Faker

The *perashah* mentions a very unique ceremony that occurred only once in the history of *Klal Yisrael*. When they came into *Eress Yisrael* there were two adjacent mountains—Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Eval. Six Tribes stood on one mountain and six Tribes stood on the second mountain. A series of blessings and curses were recited, to which everyone needed to respond *Amen*.

The Torah proceeds to list the eleven “curses” (*Arurim*) which were to be part of this recitation. These are eleven sins for which a person who transgressed them should be cursed. It was like a national *Kabbalat Shevuah* (acceptance of a binding oath) not to be in violation of these eleven transgressions.

Some of the sins for which it was proclaimed “Accursed be he who...” are:

Degrades his father or mother.

Moves back the boundary of his fellow.

Causes a blind person to go astray on the road.

Perverts a judgment of a convert, orphan, or widow.

Lies with the wife of his father or with any animal or with his sister or mother-in-law.

Strikes his fellow in secret.

Takes a bribe to kill an innocent person.

Are these eleven things the worst sins in the Torah? It does not say “Cursed be one who desecrates the Shabbat.” It does not say “Cursed be one who eats *hamess* on Pesach.” Some of the things mentioned do not involve the serious *Karet* penalty, nor even the less serious penalty of *makkot* (lashes). If we had to pick a list of “the worst eleven,” maybe we would have listed some of the eleven items, such as those involving *Avodah Zarah* or illicit relations. But most of them do not seem to be “all that bad” that they should be worthy of this unique curse. So why were these eleven singled out?

The *Sefer Darash Mordechai* suggests a common denominator to all eleven items. These sins are all done behind closed doors in which a person can act hypocritically. A person can act as the biggest *sadik* out in public, and behind closed doors he can treat his parents with utter disrespect.

“Cursed be he who encroaches on the boundary of his fellow man.” A person can promote himself as one of the most honest businessmen there are, and yet he will move the boundary demarcation a couple of inches, and no one will know the difference.

“Cursed is he who leads the blind man astray on the road.” The commentaries dispute what this applies to, but according to *Rambam* this refers to giving bad advice. You tell a person “Listen, you invest in this deal and you will make a fortune!” when you are purposely giving him bad advice, for your own advantage. All of these things, a person can in fact externally promote himself as a most upstanding citizen, but in secret – behind closed doors it is quite a different story.

So, what is this unique ceremony all about? It is about being fakers. That is why these are *Arur* (cursed behavior). A person needs to be “*Tocho k’Baro*”—the same on the inside as on the outside. A person must be who he is everywhere—in the privacy of his home and in the public arena. All these people here are acting secretly. Such behavior is intolerable. The *Ribono shel Olam* cannot suffer such hypocrisy.

One of the themes of the High Holidays is “*V’Taher Leebeinu l’ovdecha b’Emet*”

(Purify our hearts to serve you in **truth**). We must be honest. We must act with integrity. What you see is what you get. What is apparent to people must be what you really are. When you are “one way with your mouth and one way with your heart” or “one way outside and one way inside” then you are a faker. This is what the Torah condemns as deserving the *Arur* curse. That is why these eleven things—although perhaps not the most egregious of *Averot*—nevertheless have this element of fakery which the Torah singles out for explicit condemnation. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

Man’s Search for Meaning

Moshe tells the nation, “Your eyes beheld the great signs and wonders, but Hashem did not give you a heart to comprehend, eyes to see, or ears to hear until this day.” Moshe was obviously referring to the day that the Jews received a Torah comprehension of events. But it defies logic. After all, what does one need to understand about wonders? Water turning to blood, supernatural invasions of wild animals, locusts, and fire-filled hail need no rocket scientist to fathom G-d’s power. Surely the splitting of the sea is as amazing an event that will marvel one’s eyes and stir the senses of any people. What then does Moshe mean when he tells the nation that Hashem “did not give you a heart to comprehend, eyes to see, or ears to hear until this day”?

Rav Noach Weinberg, dean of *Aish HaTorah* Institutions, tells the story of the young man who came to him in search of spiritual meaning. The young man entered the portals of *Yeshiva Aish HaTorah* for a few days and then decided to leave the yeshiva in his quest for spiritual meaning across the Land of Israel. The student stopped at synagogues in Meah Shearim, visited the holy sites in Tiberias and Tzefat, and after two weeks of spiritual-hunting returned to Jerusalem and headed straight back to the Yeshiva.

“Rabbi Weinberg,” he exclaimed. “I spent two weeks in travelling the length and breadth of Israel in search of spirituality, and I found absolutely nothing!”

Rabbi Weinberg just nodded. “You say you traveled the entire country and did not find any spirituality?” “Yes sir,” came the resounding reply. “None whatsoever!”

“Let me ask you,” continued the Rabbi, “how did you find the Bafoofsticks?”

“Bafoofsticks?” countered the student. What’s a Bafoofstick?”

“That’s not the point,” responded the Rabbi, “I just want to know how you feel about them.”

The young man looked at the Rabbi as if he had lost his mind. He tried to be as respectful as he could under the circumstances. “Rabbi!” he exclaimed in frustration, “I’d love to tell you how the Bafoofsticks were, but frankly I have no idea what in the world is a Bafoofstick!” Rabbi Weinberg smiled. He had accomplished his objective. “Tell me,” he said softly. “And you know what spirituality is?”

Moshe tells the nation that it is possible to be mired in miracles and still not comprehend the greatness that surrounds you. One can see miraculous revelations but unless he focuses his heart and mind he will continue to lead his life uninspired as before.

In fact, even blessings need to be realized. In offering blessing the Torah tells us, “The blessings will be upon you and they will reach you.” If blessings are upon us of course they reach you! Why the redundancy? Once again the Torah teaches us that it is possible to be surrounded by blessing and not realize it. There are people who are surrounded by health, wealth, and great fortune, but their lives are permeated in misery. They have the blessing, but it has not reached them.

We need more than physical or even spiritual blessing. We need more than experiencing miraculous events. It is not enough to see miracles or receive the best of fortune. We must bring them into our lives and into our souls. Then we will be truly blessed. (Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky)