

achieve greatness. However, in each case, once the society became comfortable, the decline in effort, morals, and success began. The soft, easy life eventually led to the culture's downfall.

There's a lesson to be learned from this repetitious and historical social phenomenon. When you are feeling smug, don't get comfortable in the glow of what you have already achieved. Push yourself to an uncomfortable exertion of effort towards even higher levels of achievement. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

### The Ultimate Healer

“There are occasions when Hashem gives people useful ideas for what appears to be a minor benefit. The discovery of radium led to applications as different as luminous dials, X-Ray machines, and the use of radiation to treat diseases.”

During challenging times, we should attempt to realize that Hashem gives man the knowledge to discover applications to heal others. Hashem sends the cure before the disease and with prayer we can realize that He is the Ultimate healer. (Norman D. Levy; Based on Rabbi Miller's, Duties of the Mind)

### Saved by a Dream

In 1972 Mordechai Shaboboi was an aspiring athlete who had been training for years for the Israeli Olympic team. Just a week before the long awaited Summer Games, Mordechai had a strange dream: He saw an old man with a long white beard, digging at a grave in the cemetery in Sefat. The dream would not have made much of an impression on Mordechai, who was not religious, but for the fact that the dream repeated itself every night that week!

His wife encouraged him to set his mind at ease by making an investigation based on the clues he had, and he set out for Sefat and searched for the gravesite of his dream. He located it immediately, noting the name of the *saddik* buried there, but he did not recognize it. Then he entered a local bookstore, and when he looked around at the pictures of Rabbis for sale, he recognized the name under one of the pictures – it was the same as that on the tombstone of the grave in his dream! The *Sadik* was the Avriher Rebbe, known as the *Bat Ayin*.

Mordechai realized that the dream must have been a Heavenly message for him, and he decided to remain in Sefat instead of realizing his lifelong dream of performing at the Olympics. Several days later the world was shocked by the terrorist attack on Israeli athletes at the Olympics in Munich, Germany, where many lives were lost.

This turn of events electrified Mordechai – the Avriher Rebbe had saved his life! He determined to drastically change his ways, foregoing his dreams of Olympic glory and instead becoming an observant Jew. Ultimately Mordechai truly became a champion. (A *Mazeldig Voch*)

*The Lorraine Gammal A "H Edition*

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## Congregation Magen Abraham

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### SHABBAT

SHOFTIM ☆ οηfψ□π↔□θ, □X♥↑

Haftarah: Yeshayahu 51:12-52:12

**AUGUST 17-18, 2018 7 ELUL 5778**

Friday Shir Hashirim/Minhah: <b>6:28, 7:00, 7:23</b>	Shaharit: <b>5:11, 6:40, 8:10, 9:00, 9:10</b>
Candlelighting: <b>7:33 pm</b>	Morning Shema by: <b>8:43 am</b>
Evening Shema after: <b>8:31 pm</b>	Shabbat Classes: <b>6:10 pm</b>
	Shabbat Minhah: <b>7:10 pm</b>
	Shabbat Ends: <b>8:29 pm (R" T 9:01 pm)</b>
These times are applicable <u>only</u> for the Deal area.	Sunday Minhah: <b>7:00 pm</b>

**This bulletin is dedicated by Joey & Karen Mizrahi  
in memory of Joseph Tobias** לְעִלּוּי נְשָׁמַת יוֹסֵף בֶּן אֶסְתֵּר

**This bulletin is dedicated by Danny & Marilyn Safdieh  
in memory of Meir ben Sabout – Mike Safdieh** לְעִלּוּי נְשָׁמַת מֵאִיר בֶּן צְבוּת

**This bulletin is dedicated by Mitchell Antar  
in memory of Eddie Antar** לְעִלּוּי נְשָׁמַת עֲזָרָא בֶּן רוֹזָה

Weather permitting, *Bircat Halebanah* will be recited on Saturday night. If not, it may be said until Saturday night, August 25.

Mabrook to Stephen & Lisa Betesh on the marriage of their daughter, Sharon, to Isadore Betesh.

Mabrook to Isaac & Shirley Mansour on the marriage of their son, Ezra, to Rachel Gammal.

Mabrook to Sam & Elizabeth Sitt on the marriage of their son, Morris, to Danielle Ashkenazie. Mabrook to the grandparents, Morris & Stella Sitt.

### A Message from our Rabbi

”תָּמִים תִּהְיֶה עִם ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ”

“You must be perfect with Hashem your G-d.” (*Debarim* 18:13)

The *Hafess Hayim* zt”l noted that a person is required to have total trust “*Im Hashem Elokecha*,” only when dealing with his Creator. However, when dealing with other people, he must not be naïve and put himself in a position where he is at the

mercy of others. Rather, he must keep his wits about him and not permit himself to be deceived. This was the quality of Ya'akov, who was an "*Ish Tam*," yet dealt with Laban with cunning.

Rabbi Yisrael Salanter zt"l said that one must take time to perfect his character and *midot*, even if he must sacrifice growth in Torah because of this. He proved this from the *halachah* that states that if one has a small whole bread and a large piece of bread, he must recite the *berachah* on the whole bread even though it is smaller (O.H. 168). The same is true in regard to spiritual matters. Being wholesome in character takes precedence over greatness in Torah, since proper *midot* is a prerequisite to studying Torah.

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

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## *The True Cause and Effect*

A good businessman knows that he must be attuned to cause and effect. If a business deal is succeeding, he searches for the cause of the fortune. If business is bad, he searches for the reason. There are times where the true cause is not always obvious; in order to ensure success, one must discover the true cause of success and pursue it. A Torah mindset recognizes that there is always a spiritual cause, and the true cause may be the opposite of what it seems.

The *Bet Halevi* in *Parashat Mikess* illustrates this point as follows; when you see a businessman make a great deal earning him a million dollars, we think that the deal was the cause and the million was the effect. In reality the opposite is true; Hashem deemed the man worthy of receiving a million dollars, as a result He sent him the business deal as a means of giving him the money. The money was the cause of the deal, not the other way around.

Sometimes the true cause is obvious, other times it is obscure. Hashem gives us retribution measure for measure, thus it is easier to find the action that served as the catalyst of the results.

The *talmidim* of *Yeshivas Etz Chaim* were once at R' Isser Zalman's house for a *bechina*. Suddenly they heard the Rebitzen summon her husband to the kitchen. He returned shortly and excused himself for a few minutes to take care of an urgent matter. When he returned he explained what had transpired. "My wife was cooking milk in the kitchen when it overflowed, that is what disturbed her so much. I asked her why she is making such a big deal about it. She said that for years this has never happened, if it happened now there must be a reason for it.

"She then explained what she thought could possibly have caused the milk to spill over. "For many years we had an old milkman delivering us milk every day. Every *Rosh Hodesh* he would get paid. As he aged he felt less able to do his route. Last month he finally retired. We were surprised when he came to our door last month for payment. He explained himself, 'Just because I can't work anymore doesn't mean that I don't need my regular income'. We had pity on him and gave him his regular pay.

"This morning was *Rosh Hodesh*. He must have come when we were away by a bris. Being that there was no response to his knock, he must have assumed that we decided to no longer pay him. He must be terribly miserable at the thought of having zero income. Perhaps as a result of not paying him, my milk spilled over."

"My Rebitzen decided that we must immediately go to the milkman's house to rectify the situation. Sure enough, while standing by his door we heard him bemoan his fate of not getting paid, and he was delighted to hear that he would not be removed from the payroll after all."

This is someone who lives their life attuned to the spiritual cause and effect.

With the approach of Rosh Hashanah we are all seeking ways to merit a good year. We have to pursue success by rectifying the true cause of success. If we improve our ways then we will be deserving of success.

Everything we have is given to us as a tool to serve Hashem. On Rosh Hashanah it is determined how many tools we should be given the following year. If we focus our lives on serving Hashem, and daven for Hashem to give us, for his sake; we are pursuing the true cause of success and can hope that it will yield fruit. The key to success is to recognize the true cause and effect. (*Tiferes Yosef*)

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## *The Influence of Our Actions on Others*

How much of an influence do you have on others? When you do something privately does it affect those around you?

If a corpse is found outside of a city, the elders of the town are required to bring an *עולה ערוה* as an atonement for the murder. Why must the closest town bring it? What did they do wrong?

The *Ibn Ezra* explains: if the townspeople would be totally innocent of such a crime, it would affect the atmosphere that no one would be able to commit such a crime in the area. If someone was killed outside their town, it is a sure sign that they have what to improve on in this area, thus they need atonement.

This is not only true when it comes to bad deeds; with good deeds there is an influence as well. A man was once traveling through Poland. While there he davened in a certain shul. After davening he approached the Rav and said, "I can't explain it, but somehow my davening was on a whole different level when I davened here. It felt as if the davening just flowed; it was easier than usual to concentrate. I felt that my davening was somehow uplifted." The Rav asked him, "Did you daven in this and this seat?" The man responded, "Yes, how did you know". The Rav said, "There is a tradition that the Vilna Gaon once came to our town and davened in that very seat. Since then, whoever davens in that seat feels that their davening is uplifted. Apparently the great *kavana* of the Vilna Gaon had such an effect on the area that it affects everyone who davens there centuries later."

The influence of our actions is not limited to our surroundings; it affects every other Jew. When one of us does something good, it lifts all of us up. And when someone does something bad it drags everyone down. The reason for this is because all of our souls are connected; we are considered as if we are one man. *Hazal* say כל ישראל זה בזה *ערכים זה בזה* this is usually translated as, "All Jews are guarantors for each other", meaning, we are responsible for one another. However, the *Tomer Devorah* says it means 'we are all mixed in with each other', because we are all considered one person.

(*Tiferes Yosef*)

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## *Pain and Gain*

It pays to travel. It is not only the different people we meet, or the beautiful or historic places we visit, that make travel so beneficial. It is the fact that when we return home to the good old U.S. of A., we realize that we really have the best standard of living on the planet. Cell phones, pocket computers, hi-tech appliances, and leisure activities all enhance the life of an average American. It's really great, isn't it?

Well, history gives us warning. Most of the extinct civilizations of history – the Ancient Egyptians, the Romans, the Greeks – developed great societies and produced a living standard that outdid their contemporaries. In the period it took to rise from oblivion to fame, great effort and even some suffering were expended in order to