

to attend to the *Hafess Hayim* and fulfill his every need. Now, his beloved Rabbi was close to death. How could *Klal Yisrael* survive without the *Hafess Hayim's* guiding hand?

One evening, R' Mordechai entered the *bet midrash* and spent the entire night engrossed in the recital of *Tehillim*, tears streaming down his cheeks as he fervently prayed to Hashem for the *Hafess Hayim's* recovery. By morning R' Mordechai was still hunched over his *Tehillim* in the deserted *bet midrash*, immersed in earnest prayer.

Seeing that the *bet midrash* was empty, he hesitated for a moment, then slowly approached the *aron hakodesh*. He felt that he must do more than just pray for the *Hafess Hayim*. Now, with nobody else to witness what he was about to do, he opened the *aron hakodesh* and lovingly kissed the *sifrei Torah*.

"*Ribbono Shel Olam*," he whispered, "*Klal Yisrael* needs the *Hafess Hayim*. I am thereby giving up five years of my life for him so he should have a speedy recovery."

Without another word, R' Mordechai closed the *aron* and returned to his seat. People would soon be coming, and he did not want anyone to know what he had done.

Days later, the news raced through Radin. The *Hafess Hayim* was recuperating! The danger was past! Within a few weeks, the *Hafess Hayim* had fully recovered.

R' Mordechai happily looked forward to resuming his holy duties for the *Hafess Hayim*, but a nagging thought troubled him. He had granted five years of his life to his beloved Rabbi, but he was only a young man in his early twenties. What good could five of his years be for a *gadol* of the *Hafess Hayim's* stature? Perhaps someone on a higher level would be required to donate years for the *Hafess Hayim*. On the other hand, if the value of the years would be measured by the level of the recipient, there would be no problem. R' Mordechai would have given his Rabbi five years which the *Hafess Hayim* could use at his own sublime level. But how could he know which theory was correct?

He decided to approach the *Hafess Hayim* and ask him a "theoretical question." As R' Mordechai approached the *Hafess Hayim's* desk, the *gadol* gazed steadily at him and said, "Mordche, you should know that your prayers were accepted in heaven."

At first, R' Mordechai assumed that the *Hafess Hayim* referred to his prayers which, like those of all *Klal Yisrael*, had been dedicated to the *gadol's* recovery. But the *Hafess Hayim* continued, "I will give you my word, Mordche, that in the merit of what you have given me, you will live to be as old as I am now."

R' Mordechai stared at his Rabbi in shock. How had he known of the offer he had made to Hashem several weeks ago?

The *Hafess Hayim* lived for five more fruitful years, before his passing in 1933 at the age of ninety-three. R' Mordechai Londinski never breathed a word in public about the incident that had taken place between him and his Rabbi, although he did relate the story to his oldest son, Moshe.

In *Sivan* of 1995, when he had just turned eighty-nine, R' Mordechai passed away. He was one year older than the *Hafess Hayim* had been during his near-fatal illness.

At R' Mordechai's funeral, R' Moshe Londinski repeated his father's story for the first time, then added, "My father would have wanted this story to be told for only one reason: to show the world more of the holiness of the *Hafess Hayim*." (Visions of Greatness II)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

ט"תתפ"ח, X ט"ט, v. α ↔ ° β ηΥκηγκ

σξχ

Congregation Magen Abraham

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



SHABBAT NASO ☆ ט"ז, X♥↑

Haftarah: Shoftim 13:2-25

MAY 25-26, 2018 12 SIVAN 5778

Friday Shir Hashirim/ Minhah: 6:44, 7:30	Shaharit: 4:33, 6:40, 8:30, 9:15 am
Candlelighting: 7:56 pm	Morning Shema by: 8:17 am
Evening Shema after: 8:54 pm	Shabbat Classes: 6:35 pm
	Shabbat Minhah: 7:35 pm
	Shabbat Ends: 8:55 pm (R"T 9:27 pm)

These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Sunday Minhah: **7:00 pm**

Weather permitting, Bircat Halebanah will be recited on Saturday night. If not, it may be said until Monday night, May 28.

Mabrook to Danny & Marilyn Safdieh on the birth of a granddaughter.

A Message from our Rabbi

"וְאִם לֹא נִטְמְאָה הָאִשָּׁה וְטָהְרָה הִוא וְנִקְתָּה וְנִזְרְעָה זְרַע"

"But if the woman had not forfeited her purity and is pure then she remains untouched and shall conceive seed." (Bemidbar 5:28)

In *Parashat Naso* we are taught a most encouraging lesson. The Torah tells us about a married woman who is suspected of being unfaithful. She is tested with a special drink prepared by the *Kohen*. If she was really unfaithful, she will die. If she was innocent she lives. However, not only does she live, but the Talmud (*Berachot* 31) says that one opinion says if she was unable to conceive and have children, now she will. Another opinion says that if she had difficulty giving birth up until now, she will give birth easily. All agree that she will be blessed.

There is a great question here. Why is she blessed? This is a woman whom the Torah says was warned by her husband not to go into private seclusion with this man. She went so far as to rebel against her husband by going into seclusion. We know this is so, because if she didn't, she is not even tested with the waters. So why is she blessed?

Rabbi Eliyahu Lopian says we have here a fundamental lesson. This woman was low enough that as a married woman she went so far as to go into seclusion despite being warned. It must be she had a great fire of desire burning in her! Why didn't she do the final sin? We must say that when it came to the moment of truth, she conquered

her desire and "did not become impure" and "תהא טרופת - she is pure!" What a great victory! She might be held accountable for disobeying her husband and must make *teshubah*. However, Hashem will reward her fully for her great act of self-control. Hashem does not hold back reward for any good act we do, even if it is mixed in with something less than good. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Strive for Greater Heights

R' Yaakov Galinski would visit the house of the *Hazon Ish*. R' Yaakov relates, "One time the *Hazon Ish* asked me as follows, 'Every morning we make the *berachah* of שלא עשני גוי . Why do we not be more direct and say לעשני ישראל ?'

The *Hazon Ish* answered, 'To receive the status of 'Yisrael' takes much work of self-improvement. This status was not given by default. However, Hashem did us a favor and gave us a head start; by default we are not a *goy*. For this we thank Hashem every day.'

We cannot remain complacent with our status quo; we must constantly strive to reach greater heights.

The *Gemara* states that one who witnesses a *Sotah* at the time of her punishment, should accept upon themselves to be a *Nazir*. The *Mefarshim* ask, why is seeing a sinner in their state of retribution not suffice as a source of inspiration? Why is there a need to become a *Nazir*?

There are many answers given to this question, each one is a lesson within itself . I would like to suggest a novel answer.

We have a need to feel that we are excelling. This feeling propels us to keep on striving. When we see how low other people are, we are at risk of feeling satisfied with our status quo of being better than others. Thus, when one sees a *sotah* it is advisable to become a *Nazir* as a means of committing oneself to strive higher.

This idea is reminiscent of a great quote from R' Chaim Dov Keller. "Most of us are not at risk of sinking to the low level of the street. However, the street does put us at risk; the risk of becoming complacent with our level. By seeing how much greater we are than others we become satisfied, and lose our motivation to reach greater heights."

Hashem instructed us קדושים תהיו , you must constantly strive for greater levels of *Kedushah*, כי קדוש אני . The אור החיים says that Hashem is saying that no matter what you have accomplished, there is still room for growth, for I am holier than you.

The *Rosh* says in *Orhot Haim*, "When it comes to *Ruhniyut*, we must not look at people who have less than us, rather, we must look at people who are greater than us". This will keep us motivated to strive higher. (*Tiferes Yosef*)

How Does It Look?

(*Bemidbar* 6:13) "טֹרֵף הַנָּזִיר, טֹרֵף הַנָּזִיר, טֹרֵף הַנָּזִיר, טֹרֵף הַנָּזִיר, טֹרֵף הַנָּזִיר"

"This is the law of the *nazir*, on the day of the completion of his vow."

The *nazir* must bring a sacrifice at the conclusion of the term of his vow. The reason for this *korban* is puzzling. A sacrifice of this type is normally brought as a sin-offering; this sacrifice on the other hand is offered at the completion of a great *misvah*. The *nazir* has just spent time devoting himself to Hashem, removing himself from the pleasures and delights of the world. Why must he bring a sacrifice?

Rabenu Bahya explains that this *korban* is brought because it appears as if the *nazir* is removing himself from Hashem. Although he is only returning to his normal

state of service to G-d, moving from a higher level to a lower level appears to be a misdeed and requires a sacrifice. If the *nazir* did not actually commit a sin, but merely seemed to, why is he obligated to bring a *korban*?

The *korban* of the *nazir* is teaching us a lesson with far-reaching ramifications. Although our actions may be well within the limits of *halachah*, the mere appearance of impropriety is in itself a sin. *Rabenu Bahya* teaches that acting in a way that seems to be wrong but isn't, and actually committing a sin have a comparable effect upon us.

This *korban* sheds new light on the importance of our actions. Everything we do, whether spiritual or mundane, has an impact upon us. We will be taken to task for all our actions, even those that merely appear to be improper. The way we dress, eat and speak must be appropriate for one who is in the service of Hashem. If it seems that we are speaking *lashon hara* or if it appears that we are acting disrespectfully towards our fellow man, we have committed a sin. (*Majesty of Man*)

Instant Gratification

"Do you like instant coffee?" Abraham asked.

"No. I only drink the real brew," replied Aharon.

"Same here," said Abe. "I don't understand how people eat microwave food either."

Many people would agree with Aharon and Abe, preferring the "real thing" to the instant variety of everything from soups to dinners.

The only problem with the "real thing" is that preparing it takes much longer.

Sometimes, however, fast is not good.

In the Torah (*Debarim* 23:2), Hashem states, about the enemy:

"I will not chase him out in [only] one year, lest the land become desolate and the [wild] animals will overpower you."

In life, we must find the proper balance. In a low-priority situation – such as when you don't have time to make fresh-brewed java – instant may not be the same, but the trade-off is worth it. However, when it comes to education and self-improvement, the long-term goal is best served by a step-by-step climb to success. Instant gratification is fine for frivolities, but when dealing with issues that really matter, "no pain no gain" is the way to go.

Put in the effort and reap the long-lasting benefits. Patience sometimes pays, even in a wireless, digital world. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Footprints

"When a person walks on snow drifts, how does he sense he is slipping and how is he able to avoid falling without even thinking about it? It is one of the kindnesses of Hashem that He made it possible for us to function and enjoy the freedom of movement that our body gives us."

As one looks back on the footprints of his life, the only answer to his survival is that he was carried through the kindness of Hashem. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller's *Duties of the Mind*)

A Gift of Life

In the year 1928, the entire Jewish world was horrified to hear that the saintly *Hafess Hayim*, at the age of eighty-eight, was terribly ill. All around the globe, prayers streamed heavenward as *Klal Yisrael* begged Hashem to spare the *Hafess Hayim* and allow him to recuperate and receive a complete *refuah sheleimah*.

One young man of twenty-three, who lived next door to the *Hafess Hayim* was

particularly distressed. R' Mordechai had long since cherished the unique opportunity