

Dos and Don'ts

Dodah Yonah (Aunt Yonah) cut the cucumbers in the same manner she always did. An elderly woman, she adjusted her apron and disregarded the pleas from her niece and nephew to stop and sit down. She placed a container of humus on the table and turned back toward her company. That's just the way Dodah Yonah was. Composed. Collected. Stoic. Always in control of her emotions.

The Dinovitzers made it their business to visit their aunt every time they came to Israel. They felt it was important to visit her and for their children to get to know her. Her simple apartment was located in Givatayim on the outskirts of Ramat Gan.

The conversation was going well. They had been discussing their families, both in Israel and back in the States. While Yitzhak and his children sat in the small yet tidy kitchen, Dodah Yonah kept herself occupied getting lunch ready for the family, not allowing their conversation to interfere with her preparations. The sound of "Kol Yisrael," the Israeli news station, buzzed in the background, and the beeping sound coming from the radio indicated that there was an important news bulletin.

The news flash carried tragic information. A 19-year-old Israeli soldier had been murdered in an Arab attack in East Jerusalem. Yitzhak was listening to the news report and not paying attention to his aunt when he suddenly heard the sound of a knife clanging on the floor. Yitzhak looked up and watched his aunt, who always kept her composure, holding onto the kitchen counter, bracing herself. She removed a handkerchief from her apron pocket and buried her face in it. Sobs filled the air and for a moment, time stood still in Dodah Yonah's Givatayim apartment. No one said a word. All that could be heard were the soft muffled cries of a woman crying for a mother who had lost a son and for a young man who would not live long enough to see his own children, never see his parents again. And then, just like that, it was over. She wiped her eyes one last time, picked up her knife from the floor and turned back toward the counter. Once again she continued her methodical slicing of the vegetables.

Yitzhak watched in silence and admiration. He had never seen anything like it in his life. The sensitivity, the empathy, that she displayed was awesome. Yitzhak didn't know what to say. Finally he blurted out, "You react that way every time an Israeli soldier loses his life?" His puzzled expression showed his total bewilderment.

Dodah Yonah turned back toward her nephew. She put the knife back down on the counter and stared at him. Her response is one that he will never forget.

She looked at him and asked in disbelief, "And you don't?" (Touched by a Story 2)

The Lorraine Gammal A "H Edition
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SHABBAT SHEMOT ☆ ,Iv♣9, □X♥↑

Haftarah: Yirmiyahu 1:1 - 2:3

JANUARY 5-6, 2018 19 TEBET 5778

Friday Minhah: **4:26 pm**

Candlelighting: **4:26 pm**

Evening Shema after: **5:24 pm**

Shaharit: **6:20, 6:40, 8:30, 9:15 am**

Morning Shema by: **9:08 am**

Shabbat Class: **3:30 pm**

Shabbat Minhah: **4:05 pm**

Shabbat Ends: **5:25 pm (R"Y 5:57 pm)**

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Sunday Minhah: **4:30 pm**

A Message from Our Rabbi

"וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶסְתַּרְהָנָא וְאָרְאָה אֶת־הַמִּרְאָה הַגָּדֹל הַזֶּה"

"Moshe thought, 'Let me turn aside now and see this great sight.'" (*Shemot* 3:3)

Our *parashah* has in it the episode of the Burning Bush. Moshe was grazing his sheep and he saw the burning bush, and Hashem appeared to him for the first time. *Rabenu Bahya* zt"l explains that Moshe *Rabenu* experienced three important revelations. At first he saw a fire which at first seemed natural and common. This he saw with his regular physical senses. But, when he saw that the fire didn't burn out, he came closer to see if perhaps the wood was different or perhaps the fire was different. As a result of looking at the fire he became inspired; his mind elevated to see an angel of Hashem. After this his mind was further elevated; he saw the *Shechinah*, which is the Presence of Hashem. Since this was Moshe's first prophecy, Hashem wanted to teach him one step at a time how to elevate his mind, to strengthen his mind to receive prophecy, and view the *Shechinah*.

Rabenu Bahya's view needs further explanation. Why was Moshe elevated by viewing the fire? According to the explanation, he went to look at a physical and natural occurrence. Since the bush was not consumed, he looked to see if the wood was different or the fire was different. How was the viewing of a physical happening the cause of a spiritual uplifting of his mind? So much so that he was able to see an angel?

The conclusion must be that there was no such thing as Moshe just looking at something. When he would look at something "natural" in this world it was cloaked in a spiritual experience. All the things in this world are a testimony on the wondrous acts of Hashem. The world, the Heavens, the stars, all speak the glory of Hashem. When he

looked at nature his intent was to heighten his understanding of the creation Hashem did. It was a spiritual experience. Therefore, when becoming inspired by the fire, he was able to see Hashem's angel.

This is a lesson for us how to look at nature. We should intend that we look "for the sake of Heaven," because this could lead us to cling to Hashem. Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Beneficial Hatred

"וּבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל פָּרוּ וַיִּשְׂרְצוּ וַיִּרְבּוּ וַיַּעֲצֻמוּ בְּמֵאד מְאֹד וַתִּמְלֵא הָאָרֶץ אֹתָם"
"B'nei Yisrael were fruitful and prolific, and their population multiplied. They were exceedingly mighty, and the land was filled with them."
(Shemot 1:7)

Sefer Shemot begins by recounting the greatest single event after the Creation of the Universe: the advent of *Klal Yisrael*, the Jewish Nation. The miracle of the astonishing population explosion in Egypt is one of the wonders which we must always remember and proclaim, for in reality, the creation of *Klal Yisrael* was the purpose for which creation of the world was achieved.

Rav Avigdor Miller zt"l quotes the *pasuk* from *Tehillim* (104:24-25), "Vayefer et amo me'od...hafach libam lisno amo lehitnakel ba'abadav – He caused His people to become very fruitful...He turned their heart to hate His people, to plot against His servants."

As a result of the Jewish People becoming fruitful and multiplying, Hashem intentionally caused the Egyptians to have a change of heart against them. As the *pasuk* states, "Vatimaleh ha'arets otam – The land [of Egypt] became full with them." The Jewish People became so numerous that they could not be restricted solely to the land of Goshen, and they began to spread all throughout Egypt. However, with this great expansion, arose the peril of assimilation and intermarriage, and Hashem raised up a wall of animosity between the Children of Israel and the Egyptians. In fact, their hostility was instigated by Hashem, and His purpose was to protect the holy qualities of *B'nei Yisrael* from deteriorating, which could conceivable come about from close affiliation with Egyptian society and culture.

Hashem sometimes employs animosity as a barrier to protect the worthy from the unworthy. Only the Creator knows how and when to use an argument between two parties for their own good – and for the good of society. (Rav Schwab on *Chumash*)

Appreciation

"וַעֲתָה הִנֵּה צָעֲקַת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּאָה אֵלַי וְגַם־רִאִיתִי אֶת־הַלֶּחֶץ אֲשֶׁר מִצְרַיִם לֹחֲצִים אֹתָם"
"Now behold, the cry of B'nei Yisrael has come to Me. I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them." (Shemot 3:9)

Mashal: A young orphan was once raised in the home of a wealthy man. The boy lacked for nothing and was treated royally, like a regular member of the family. After some time, though, the rich man's wife began to sense that the orphan seemed to be taking for granted his new, rich lifestyle and didn't really appreciate all that they had done for him.

She told her husband about her concerns, and he agreed. The rich man decided to make a test. He called in the youth and informed him that they had done all that they were capable of doing for him until now, but at this point, it was time for him to go. He was to set out alone and try to make a life for himself. To his dismay, the orphan was

put out on the street with only the shirt on his back and the few coins he had in his pocket. It had happened so fast, that at first, he didn't even know what hit him. He was unprepared for this! That first night, miserable and lonely, he slept in the street, and by the second day, he was eating from the garbage.

By the third day, the youth had had enough. He swallowed his pride and humbly knocked on the rich man's door. To his great surprise and joy, before he had a chance to utter a word, he was welcomed back in, clothed, and served a meal fit for a prince. But this time, he was not taking any chances. With joyful appreciation, he thanked his host after every bite and every course.

Nimshal: The *Ben Ish Hai* zt"l writes that had *B'nei Yisrael* remained in the Holy Land, never to experience the solitude of exile and the bitterness of slavery, they would have come to take for granted all the benefits that Hashem bestowed upon them upon entering *Eress Yisrael*. In their minds, they'd "have it coming" to them, as would befit the descendants of Abraham, Yitzhak, and Ya'akov. Thus, the harsh *galut Misrayim* was necessary so that *B'nei Yisrael* would truly appreciate the goodness of Hashem, and thank and praise Him for every bit of goodness that he did for them. (Rav Schwab on *Chumash*)

Repeat After Me

"I just can't seem to memorize this speech," Sarah complained.

"You have just got to keep repeating it," Deborah suggested. "Whenever I have to memorize something, I find I have to go over it about a hundred times before I get it."

"I must have read it fifty times already, and it still isn't sinking in," Sarah griped.

"Just reading it won't work," replied her friend. "You must repeat it out loud for it to penetrate your brain."

Memorizing anything takes a lot of work and a great deal of concentration. Reading something silently – even numerous times – may not yield success in memorization. However, articulating the words over and over again is like hammering a nail centimeter by centimeter into a piece of wood. This is true of a simple poem or even the most mundane phrase. And when it comes to principles of faith, to the words and ideals you would like to imprint on your soul, repetition – especially aloud – is necessary for successful indoctrination.

David *Hamelech* said, "I trust in the Lord; out of great suffering I spoke" (*Tehillim* 116:10). Some explain this to mean that faith becomes ingrained in a person's soul only when words of faith are spoken on a regular basis. During the day, busy as you may be, you should continue to utter words of faith:

"This could only take place if Hashem willed it."

"This beautiful tree was created by Hashem."

"Hashem is in control."

The fast-paced, modern, high-tech world we live in has many deterrents and obstacles which hinder people from developing true faith in Hashem. Once you have clarified for yourself that you are one of those who does believe in our Creator, you should start driving the point home to yourself by constant repetition out loud. This technique will not only help you remember this most important fact of life, but will also drive it into your heart so that your belief is solid and unwavering. (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)