

A Dvar Torah to encourage matters of Yiras Shomayim prepared to be shared and discussed with your family at the Shabbos table



פרשת במדבר

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TOILING IN תורה

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לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

THE NEED TO TOIL

When the Rebbe Maharash was Bar-Mitzvah age, he was once called in by his father, the Tzemach Tzedek, to be tested on מנחות, which he was then learning. After asking a number of questions, and being satisfied with the replies, the Tzemach Tzedek pointed to a specific סוגיא and asked his son if he had toiled to understand it. The Rebbe Maharash, who had a phenomenal mind, answered that he had not toiled at all, for he had understood everything without effort. The Tzemach Tzedek sighed and countered, "But how can one learn without toiling?"

Hearing this, the Rebbe Maharash decided to put effort in his learning, and did so to an extreme degree, ensuring that he was indeed working hard. As a result, after a short while, blood stains began to appear on his forehead. When the Tzemach Tzedek found out, he called the Rebbe Maharash and directed him how to continue his learning. Later the Rebbe Maharash recalled, "From then on, I would toil in learning with the precise measure of effort, just as one sets a clock..."

(רשימות היומן ע' שע"ז בשילוב תו"מ ח"ה ע' 49)

Rebbi Yitzchok said: "If someone will say that he toiled in תורה but did not find (was not successful), do not believe him. One who says that he did not work hard but did find, do not believe him either. Believe one who claims to have toiled and found. (יגעתי ומצאתי תאמין)"

Rava said: "Every physical body was created to work. Praised is the one who merited having his work and effort in תורה."

(מגילה ו' ע"ב, סנהדרין צ"ט ע"ב)

Eliyohu Hanovi related: A Talmid who was not well versed in halocho once asked me, "I learn תורה and strongly desire and await that תורה come to me, but it does not." I explained to him that only one who gives up his life for תורה, for the honor of Hasem, merits this.

(תנא דבי אליהו רבה פכ"ב)

Once the Alter Rebbe called the Tzemach Tzedek and offered to 'give' him an understanding in תורה as a gift. The Tzemach Tzedek turned down the offer, saying that he wants to acquire תורה through toiling. He later regretted this, for whatever levels of תורה he could have received from the Alter Rebbe, there would always be additional levels to יגיעה.

(לקו"ש חט"ו ע' 81)

Two businessmen traveled to the city of the גאון Reb Meshulem Igra to ask him to act as arbitrator regarding a money dispute

between them. Hearing their complaints, Reb Meshulem asked that they return in a number of days, during which he will look into the matter.

The businessmen felt they needed an immediate reply, so they decided to return home and ask the Rov of their city to help them. Hearing their complaint, The Rov stepped into his room, and after a few minutes, came out and gave a response that satisfied both businessmen. Greatly impressed, the two related to all the extent of the Rov's knowledge, that within a few minutes, he had been able to supply a proper reply to a complicated issue, one that even the great גאון Reb Meshulem Igra had needed a few days for finding a proper solution.

Sometime later, the two businessmen found themselves in Reb Meshulem's town, and decided to ask him what he would have paskened regarding their past dilemma. Surprisingly, Reb Meshulem's reply was the same as the one their Rov had given, and they told the גאון of how their Rov supplied this reply after only a few minutes. Amazed, Reb Meshulem said that if there is such a great גאון alive, he wants to learn תורה from him.

Arriving at the Rov's home, Reb Meshulem asked that the Rov tell him whether he had reached the conclusion himself or if someone had helped him. The Rov replied, "When the two men came and presented their problem, I realized that I do not know the answer, so I went into my room and cried and davened to Hashem. I asked that he open my eyes so that I be able to give a correct reply according to תורה, and in this way, a 'חלול ה', that their Rov cannot resolve their issues, will be prevented. I merited to receive clarity from Hashem and was able to immediately find the correct answer." Hearing this, Reb Meshulem responded, "I also know how to daven and cry. Yet, one this needs to reach the conclusion through toiling in תורה..."

(היא שיחת)

THE EXTENT OF TOILING

Reb Yekusiel, a salt merchant from Liepli, was a great עובד and chossid of the Alter Rebbe, but had limited understanding in תורה and specifically, in chassidus. Once, one of the young משפיעים stopped in Liepli and stayed there for a number of days. Every day he was there, he 'chazered' a מאמר of the Mitteler Rebbe, and because of his sharp mind and talent in speaking, he left an impression on all those who heard him. However, Reb Yekusiel did not grasp the מאמרים and felt greatly disheartened.

Regarding this, he later related, "I was forty years old and had spent fifteen years going to the Alter Rebbe and learning with all my

vigor, yet, when this Yungerman chazered the מאמרים, I did not understand. Every מאמר I heard, caused me to feel utterly crushed. I had a burning desire to know the מאמרים and understand them, so I asked the Yungerman to review them for me over and over, but despite his many explanations, my mind remained like a block of wood, closed to it all. For three weeks I kept the Yungerman from continuing his journey home, and leaving the store to the responsibility of my family, I toiled for days and nights to understand what he taught me, but to no avail. The Yungerman left, and I remained like a stranded ship at sea. I fasted and said Tehillim, crying many tears, but it did not help, so I traveled to Lubavitch.

“Upon arriving in Lubavitch, I noticed that over the previous nine months that I had not been there, a new atmosphere permeated. About fifty, sixty Yungerleit sat daily, for many hours, learning chassidus diligently. On my first Shabbos there, the Mittlerer Rebbe said a מאמר, and though I understood the maamor itself, I could not understand the additional explanation of the Rebbe, unlike the Yungerleit who were able to understand. This caused me intense pain, and I cried the entire night and fasted throughout the day.

“When I went into Yechidus with the Rebbe, I told him all that had happened, and the Rebbe told me that there is nothing that stands in the way of one’s will, and a strong desire can affect a change in one’s capabilities. When I heard that it all depends on my desire, I decided to remain in Lubavitch until I would begin understanding, and sent a message to my family, that they continue running the store on their own. I spent about four months working intensely, both physically, training myself to think about an ענין for hours at a time, and emotionally, reviewing one ענין tens of times.

“That Tishrei, I felt like a new creation, as if I had ‘washed out the pot’ and become a proper recipient for receiving that which I wanted to receive, and so I traveled home.”

(אג"ק אדהריי"צ ח"ג ע' שס"ד)

The Rebbe related: When the Mittlerer Rebbe would say chassidus, he would wear a “kolok”, a type of shtrielmel with a pointed center. Unlike his father the Alter Rebbe, he would sit in one place when saying the מאמר and not move about, yet even so, he would sweat immensely from great concentration, to the point that sweat would drip from the point of his shtrielmel.

(ו' תשרי תשמ"א - שיחוי"ק ס"ג)

THE VALUE OF גיעה

Based on the זוהר, the Alter Rebbe explains that just as the Yidden toiled physically and then went out to receive the תורה, so too we must toil in learning to bring the final Geulah. The Rebbe adds that even the laziest person would choose such work over the labor in Miztrayim...

(תורה אור פ' וארא, שיחוי"ק תשמ"מ ש"פ מטו"מ סכ"ה)

On Shavuos תרצ"ו, the Friediker Rebbe said that every person must have an in depth shiur in Gemara (לעיין) and not suffice with just learning משניות, despite its importance. The Rebbe explained that this connects to Shavuos and מתן תורה, for learning which is done without effort is essentially lacking, as it does not involve the entire person.

(לקו"ש ח"ב ע' 566)

At the Rebbe’s chassunah, the Friediker Rebbe went around greeting the guests and pouring Lcha'im. Approaching the standing

area of the Bochurim, he said: “Temimim! תורה can only succeed through great effort. One who toils will understand the learning more than another who has better qualities than him. You must dedicate yourselves to learn with effort!”

(סה"ש תרפ"ט ע' 53)

At a Farbrengen (ש"פ פקודי תשמ"א), the Rebbe spoke of the need for every person to become a תלמיד חכם. The Rebbe explained that there is no shortcut to this, and it is only attainable through hard effort. One who thinks of excuses why he is unable to do so, is really only fooling himself, and unfortunately he will remain ignorant (an ע"מ הארץ)...

(שיחוי"ק שם סכ"ב)

Although the Arizal had a phenomenal mind and no worldly worries, for his father in law supported him, he would toil extensively when learning תורה, even when it was not a deep concept. The holy talmid of the Arizal, Reb Chaim Vital, described, “I saw my Rebbe, when involved with Halocho, strengthen himself like a lion, until the point of sweating. I asked him why he puts in so much effort, and he told me that purpose of learning something in depth, is to break the קליפות, which are the difficulties that come up regarding the halachos being learned.”

The Rebbe noted: It is obvious that the קליפות which the Arizal dealt with were not very strong; nevertheless, in order to break them, he toiled greatly when learning תורה. From this we can understand the importance for all Yidden, who are not on the level of the Arizal, to toil in תורה.

(שער המצוות פ' ואתחנן, התועדויות תשמ"ג ח"ב ע' 869)

When the Mezritcher Maggid first traveled to the Baal Shem Tov, he was already a great גאון in תורה and advanced in עבודה, and only lacked the new עבודה of Chassidus. Upon entering, the Baal Shem Tov asked him the pshat of a part in עץ חיים of the Arizal, one of the deepest Seforim of the תורה.. The Maggid explained the meaning, but the Baal Shem Tov said that this is not the full meaning. The Maggid looked again and insisted that this is indeed the pshat, and asked that if the Baal Shem Tov thinks otherwise, he should kindly explain it to him.

The Baal Shem Tov then began learning the words of the עץ חיים with much effort and התלהבות, that when he mentioned the names of malochim, they actually saw them in the room, and the entire house became illuminated. Upon concluding, the Baal Shem Tov explained that although the Maggid knew the simple meaning of the words, because he did not learn it with all of his capacity, his learning had been lacking.

(תו"מ חכ"ה ע' 242)

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