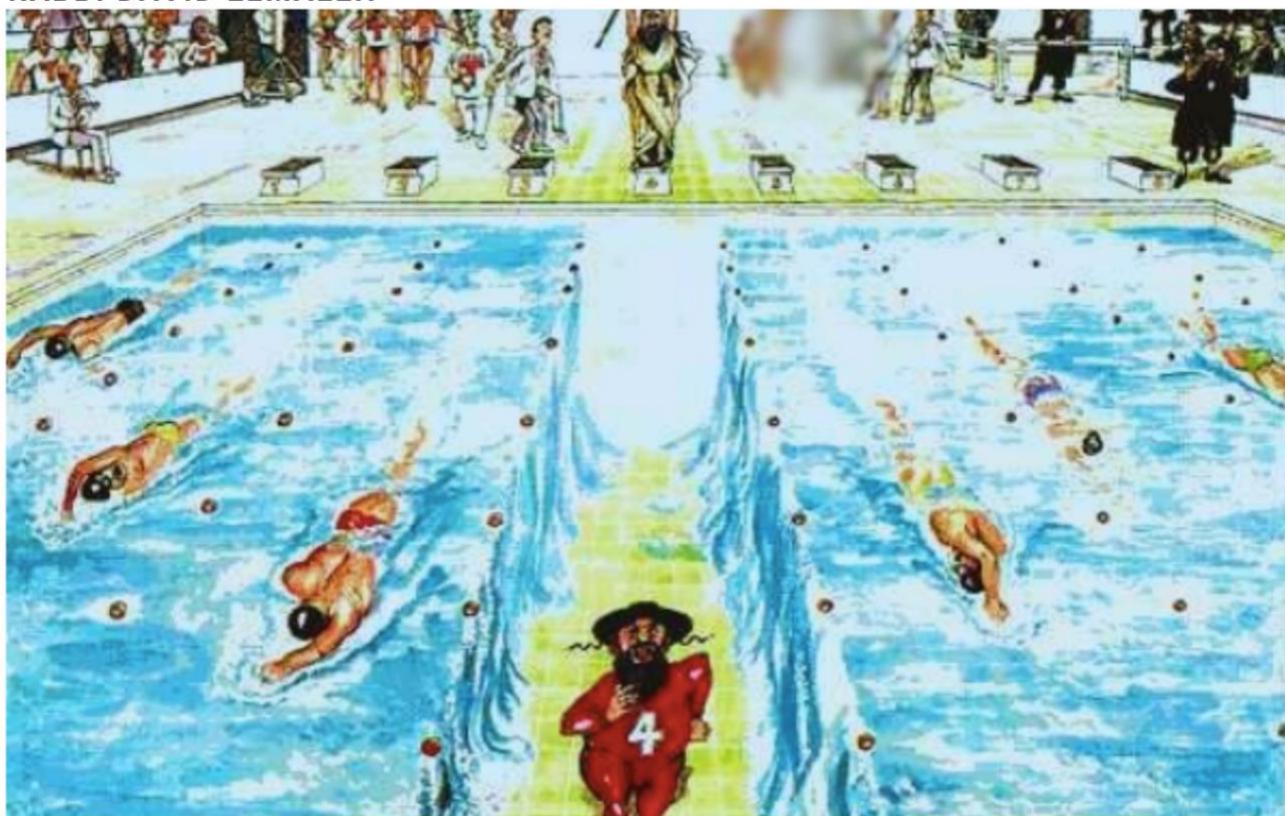




בשנה

SHABBAT SHIRA
RABBI DAVID ELMALEH

13th of Shevat
Jan 31st 2026
CANDLE LIGHTING 5:44pm
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PRAYER AS A
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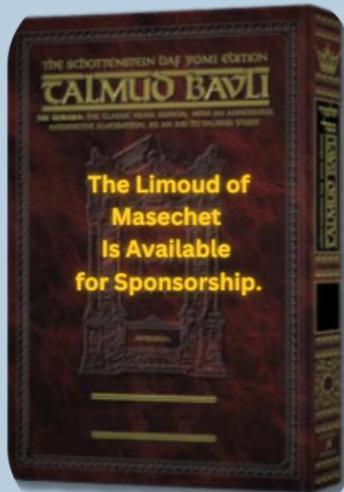
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- This Week's Seudat Shelishit has been kindly sponsored by **Mr. & Mrs. Amichaï Shoshan** in honor of the Hiloula of Rabbi Itzhak Abihssira ZT"L. Hazak U'Baruch!
- This Week's Breakfast is available for sponsorship.

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Daf Hayomi: 8:00am Sun. - Fri. (Rabbi Elmaleh)

Beki'im Bahalacha: 7:35am Sun. - Thurs. (Rabbi Elmaleh)

Hok LeIsrael: 8:50am Sun. - Fri. (Rabbi Zafrani)

Kinyan Hamasechta: Every Weekday morning. (Rabbi Elmaleh)

Semichat Chaver: Tuesday Evenings. (Rabbi Elmaleh)

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Weekly Inspiration

Prayer as a "Profession"

(Rabbi Eli Mansour)

The Torah tells that as Beneh Yisrael stood at the shores of the sea, and they saw the Egyptian army pursuing them, they cried out to G-d – "Va'yis'aku Beneh Yisrael El Hashem" (14:10).

Rashi comments: "Tafesu Umanut Abotam" – "They took hold of their forefathers' craft." Meaning, Beneh Yisrael here followed the example set for them by the patriarchs, who likewise prayed to G-d. Rashi then proceeds to cite verses from the Book of Bereshit showing that the three patriarchs – Abraham, Yishak and Yaakov – prayed.

When reading Rashi's brief remark, we must wonder what point he wishes to make, which difficulty in the text he is trying to resolve. Why must we be informed that Beneh Yisrael's prayers at the shores of the sea followed the patriarchs' example? How does this enhance our understanding of the text?

Probing a bit deeper, Rashi's comments become even more perplexing. As mentioned, Rashi cites verses that speak of the patriarchs praying. Surprisingly, however, Rashi specifically does not cite the more obvious sources of the patriarchs' prayers. Instead of pointing to Abraham's prayer on behalf of the city of Sodom, Rashi instead brings the verse that tells of Abraham returning the next day to the spot where he had prayed for Sodom (Bereshit 19:27). Instead of noting Yishak's prayer for a child, Rashi

instead cites the Torah's vague description of Yishak "conversing" in the field (Bereshit 24:63), which the Sages interpret as a reference to prayer. And instead of mentioning Yaakov's plea for help when Esav was approaching with an army, Rashi brings the verse that tells of Yaakov's evening "encounter" ("Va'yifga" – 28:11), which is understood to mean that he prayed. Why did Rashi not cite the clearest references to the patriarchs' prayers?

More generally, why did Rashi need to bring textual proof to the fact that our righteous Abot (patriarchs) prayed? Do we not already know this?

The Lubavitcher Rebbe (Rav Menachem Mendel Schneerson, 1902-1994) answered all these questions by establishing that Beneh Yisrael's cries were not actual cries for help. We must remember that these events transpired after G-d had brought the powerful Egyptian Empire to its knees with ten miraculous plagues, after Moshe had informed the people that G-d was bringing them to their homeland, and after they had taken the Egyptians' possessions with them to bring to the Holy Land. They knew that G-d would help them and save them from the pursuing Egyptian army. They did not have a doubt. (Although the Torah relates that the people turned to Moshe in panic, asking why he had taken them out of Egypt to perish, Rashi explains that this was a different group than the group who responded by praying.) They had complete faith in G-d.

This was the point that Rashi wished to clarify – that the people prayed even though they were confident that they would be saved. These prayers were not a prayer for help, for rather "Umanut Abotam" – the "craft"

taught to them by their forebears.

A person with a profession goes to work every day. He doesn't show up only when he runs out of money; he knows that he needs to tend to his profession consistently. The same is true of our connection to Hashem. We cannot build this connection only by turning to him when we face some kind of problem. We need to practice the "craft," or "profession," of prayer each and every day, even when we have no particular, pressing issue that concerns us.

This is what Rashi is teaching us. Beneh Yisrael turned to Hashem in prayer not because they were frightened, but rather because prayer was an "Umanut" – a "profession," something that they knew they must consistently do. And they learned this "profession" from the patriarchs. Abraham prayed even after Sodom was destroyed, when he could no longer save the city. Yishak prayed in the field regularly. And Yaakov prayed before going to sleep. These weren't prayers for help, but rather part of the Abot's ongoing, persistent efforts to build their relationship with Hashem. This is the "profession" that they taught us, and that we must follow.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe applied this idea to the Misva of Torah study. This obligation is not limited to practical knowledge. It goes without saying that in order to practice Judaism properly, we must learn and familiarize ourselves with Halacha, and practical Halacha must certainly take priority in our Torah curricula. However, this is not the sole objective of Torah study. We are required to learn as much as we can even about subjects that are not practically applicable. Torah learning is not only about knowledge, but also

about our connection to Hashem who gave us the Torah.

When we pray and learn Torah not only in moments of need, but with constancy and devotion, we cultivate a living, daily bond with Hashem – and this is the lifelong, sacred "profession" which we've inherited from our righteous forebears.

Moving Forward

(Rabbi Joey Haber)

Two of the fundamental tenets of Judaism are known by the terms *emunah* (faith, or belief) and *bitahon* (trust).

Much has been written about the precise meanings of these two words, and the difference between them. For our purposes, it suffices to say that the story we read in the Torah over the last two weeks – the story of the ten plagues and *Yetziat Mitzrayim* – establishes the tenet of *emunah*, and the story told in this week's *parashah* – the splitting of the sea – establishes the tenet of *bitahon*.

The miraculous plagues in Egypt showed Hashem's exclusive and unlimited control over the universe. It demonstrated that He governs the world without any constraints, without any other force being able to stop Him, and that He is constantly involved. This is *emunah* – the core belief in Hashem as the Creator who exerts unlimited control over the earth.

At the sea, *Beneh Yisrael* were taught about *bitahon* – living with the trust that Hashem can solve problems that appear to have no solution. *Emunah* is the theoretical belief in Hashem's power, and *bitahon* is the practical application of that belief, remaining calm and

composed during difficult situations, trusting that Hashem is handling it for us.

Let us take a closer look at what happened at the shores of the *Yam Suf* to learn what living with *bitahon* means.

When *Beneh Yisrael* saw the Egyptians chasing after them, and they realized that they were trapped against the sea, וַיַּעֲקֹב – they cried out to Hashem (14:10). Rashi comments that this was the proper response, that *Bene Yisrael* were following the example of the *avot* (patriarchs), who likewise cried to Hashem during times of crisis.

But then Moshe Rabbenu turned to them and said, וְלֹתָם לְכֶם – וְאַתֶּם תְּחִרְשֵׁו that they should remain silent while Hashem handles this for them (14:14). After that, Hashem told Moshe to tell the people וְיַעֲשֵׂו – to move forward into the sea (14:15).

This is the prescription for us during times of hardship.

First, וַיַּעֲקֹב – we should cry out. It is ok to feel upset, to feel anxious, to feel frustrated, to feel pained. We are supposed to feel these emotions, and not to try to suppress them. And it's ok to cry – certainly to Hashem, but also to those whom we feel comfortable sharing our feelings with, or with a therapist if need be.

At a certain point, however, וְלֹתָם תְּחִרְשֵׁו – we have to stop crying out, recognizing that וְלֹתָם לְכֶם – Hashem is handling this crisis for us, that we are in His hands. We need to stay calm and place our trust in Hashem.

And then, most importantly, וְיַעֲשֵׂו – we need to move forward. No matter what we're dealing with, we can't just give up, wallowing in our bitterness and resentment. We need to go forward and do the best we can

under the circumstances Hashem put us in.

Three days after *Beneh Yisrael* crossed the sea, they arrived in a place where they found a water source, but they could not drink the water because they were bitter, and so they called the place מַרְאָה – "bitter" (15:23). The Rebbe of Kotzk suggested a fascinating reading of this *pasuk*. He explained that it wasn't the waters that were bitter, but rather the people. When people are "bitter," when they are angry and resentful, they can never quench their thirst, they can never find satisfaction, because everything they "taste" is bitter.

We are all going to experience things that make us upset and get us down. But bitterness never helped anyone. The only way we help ourselves when things happen is – by moving forward with the faith that Hashem is handling the problem. We have to move on, doing the best we can, and trust that Hashem will do the rest.

Maybe They'll Turn Back (Samy Maya)

HaRav Bakshi Doron ZS"l writes that the song at the sea and the splitting of the sea is sang every morning, but is repeated after *Keriat Shema* in *VeYasiv VeNachon* in order to connect *geula* with *Amida*. In that beracha, before mentioning *Az Yashir*, we also mention *Makkat Bechorot*. These events give us the ability to stand before Hashem in *Amida*.

The song at the sea tells us that now, the people officially believed in Hashem. But did they not believe in Hashem after witnessing the Ten Makot and especially Makat Bechorot? The

people did believe, but Hashem knew there was something missing in our hearts. Hashem knew there was some kind of a doubt as to the power of Hashem and the love He has for us. Keriat Yam Suf would fortify their emuna. This is the doubt mentioned in the first pasuk of the perasha. Hashem did not take us directly from Egypt to Eres Pelishtim lest the people have a change of heart and turn back to Egypt.

Hashem took the people towards Yam Suf and then had no place else to go. They had no choice but to turn to Hashem in prayer. After they see the Egyptians drown, they sing Az Yashir and the emuna in Hashem is fortified. So, before Amida, we mention Makat Bechorot and then Az Yashir, as the statement of our achievement of belief.

Right after Keriat Yam Suf, the Torah details that the people began to complain about the bitter water. This event shows us that even the person that believes and prays to Hashem, like they did at Yam Suf, if his emuna is not complete and finds himself in a situation of fear, the reality of the situation could change his emuna quickly until the point where he says, it's better for me to return to Egypt. We always need to be evaluating our emuna.

Based on the kadosh words of HaRav Bakshi, we could answer two questions on the pasukim. The pasuk says that Hashem took the people not on the direct route, but a different route. Why? Because Hashem said, *maybe*, *ונ' יי*, the people will see the nations of the Land and want to return to Egypt. The question is, how could Hashem say *maybe*, doesn't Hashem know everything? Hashem would certainly know whether they would want to return or not; what

does it mean when the pasuk says *maybe*?

Secondly, after Az Yashir the people attained a great level of emuna in Hashem, but the event that comes directly after Az Yashir is the people complaining about the bitter waters! A moment after Az Yashir they lacked emuna! What then, did Hashem taking us towards Yam Suf and not taking us towards Eres Pelishtim accomplish?!? He wanted to fortify our emuna, but as soon as Yam Suf was over, we lacked it! What kind of ultimate level of emuna is this?

The answer to both questions is the same. Hashem said that we should not go on the direct route because *maybe* we would turn back. Of course, Hashem knew whether we would turn back or not and He knew we would *not* turn back. It was not a maybe for Hashem at all. Hashem took us the long way in order to rid us of *the maybe and the doubt* that would forever remain in our hearts, something worse than turning back. The Jews would go to Eres Pelishtim and they would fight, as Hashem commanded, but there would always remain a thread of doubt in their hearts. As HaRav Bakshi writes, Hashem knew what was in their hearts and He wanted to remove the maybe.

When the pasuk tells says *maybe they will return to Egypt if they see war*, it doesn't mean that they will actually return to Egypt because of the wars in the Land. It means that a *maybe* will remain in their hearts and cause them to long to return to Egypt. The events of Yam Suf would remove that doubt in emuna.

How, then, did they complain afterwards if the *maybe* was removed from their hearts? The Torah is teaching us an incredible lesson by specifically telling us that the people

complained right after. As HaRav Bakshi writes, it was to teach us how quickly emuna could change. But there is something more. The complaint was only an exterior complaint. It was only an outward display of lack of emuna. The true emuna was already established in our hearts, as the Torah tells us right before Az Yashir. By the Torah placing our complaint and outward lack of emuna right after our ultimate accomplishment of emuna, it is teaching us that throughout our history, we will have struggles with our levels of emuna. Even the generation that saw Yam Suf and sang Az Yashir went through it! **It will happen, but you have to know that the true emuna will always be set in your heart.** You will have episodes of lack in emuna, but know it is only a superficial lack of emuna. You will always believe in Hashem, the question is, how do you build yourself back up?!? How do you return from the episode and fortify your outward belief in Hashem even stronger than before?

This idea should be a great zehut to our ancestors that complained in the desert. Because of them, we are able to understand that if the people that actually sang Az Yashir had struggles with emuna, surely it could happen to us! But like that same generation that built themselves up to receive the Torah 42 days later, so could we, if our emuna is ever challenged, build ourselves up to an even greater level than before!

Food for thought

How to Support Your Wife Even When You Don't Understand Her

(Debbie Gutfreund @aish)

TRENDING IN MARRIAGE

You don't have to fully understand her to support her—presence and care matter most.

There are many times in marriage when it's hard to understand the world through your partner's eyes. But you don't have to understand everything to be loving and supportive. The most important goal in navigating challenges together is preserving and strengthening the connection in your marriage.

Here are some ways to support your wife even when you don't understand her.

Validate her feelings.

Even when you can't fully understand what your wife is experiencing, you can validate what she is feeling. Sometimes, feeling believed matters more than being understood. You can acknowledge that it's hard for you to see the situation from her perspective while still affirming her experience. Try saying something like: *"I don't completely understand, but I can see this is really hard for you."*

It also helps to recognize the challenge she is facing given the circumstances and let her know you see how overwhelming it is: *"What you're feeling makes sense given how much you're dealing with."*

Listen without jumping to problem-solving.

It can be tempting to go straight into problem-solving mode when your wife shares a challenge, especially if a practical solution seems obvious to you. But she may be turning to you for

empathy and connection rather than a solution. When that's the case, offering a solution is actually unhelpful and perceived as a lack of respect.

Let her finish speaking without interrupting. This shows that you're genuinely interested in hearing all of her feelings, and you may discover that the issue is more complex than it first appeared. You can also reflect back what you hear to make sure you understand her perspective: *"It sounds like you feel..., am I getting that right?"*

Ask open-ended questions.

One of the best ways to understand where your wife is coming from is to ask open-ended questions that don't make her feel defensive. In general, avoid using the word *"why"* when trying to help her open up. Instead, ask what she needs most from you right now. Maybe it's a hug, maybe it's a listening ear, or maybe she really does want help figuring out a solution.

If you're having trouble understanding what she's upset about, you can also ask: *"Can you help me understand how you see this?"*

Stay present.

When someone you love is upset, it can be tempting to walk away or emotionally check out until the intensity passes. This can often come across as apathy or dismissiveness. Do your best to stay present by maintaining eye contact and putting your phone away. You can offer a hug or hold her hand.

Don't underestimate the power of simply remaining quiet but present if you don't know what to say. If it seems like your wife wants space, ask her first to be sure you're reading her signals correctly.

Don't minimize or compare.

Even if you know someone going through a similar situation and coping better, don't compare your wife's reaction to theirs. You never fully know another person's circumstances or how they are truly coping. Avoid phrases like: *"It could be worse,"* *"You're overreacting,"* or *"This isn't how I would react."*

Judaism teaches that marriage is not only an opportunity to build a lifelong connection with someone you love, but also an opportunity to grow and learn to see the world through another person's eyes. You don't need to completely understand each other to support each other and grow together. Through that growth and effort, you may one day see the world through your partner's eyes and build an even stronger connection.

Supportive actions.

Support isn't only emotional. Help with something practical, take something off her plate, follow up later, and think about what matters to her—and act on it.

Support is a process.

Have patience. Support is not just one conversation; it's a consistent process over time.

Don't try to explain right away.

Conflict often increases when one person tries to explain while the other is still hurting. Avoid correcting details or defending your intent in the moment. Instead, say things like: *"Tell me more,"* or *"I want to understand before I respond."*

Validate the emotion first. Differentiate between impact and intent: *"I wasn't intending to hurt you, but I see that I did."* Avoid conditional language like *"if I hurt you."* Take responsibility for your part, even if it feels small. Remember: she is not the

problem—the problem is the problem.

You don't have to fully understand her to support her—consistent presence, humility, and care are what build lasting connection.

Kidz Corner

Don't Trust Yourself

Diverted Traffic

Have you ever been on a flight that was “diverted,” or have you ever come to a roadblock and had to follow the “diverted traffic” signs?

After leaving **Mitzrayim**, **Klal Yisrael** was led on an “alternate” route to **Eretz Yisrael**.

כִּי פָלָשִׁתִּים אֶרְצָ דָּרָךְ אֶלְקִים נָחַם וְלֹא
פָּעַם יָנַחַם פְּנֵי אֶלְקִים אָמַר כִּי הָא קָרָוב
מִצְרַיִם וְשָׁבֵן מִלְחָמָה בְּרָאָתֶם

This means that Hashem did not lead them along the way of the **Pelishtim** (which would have been the simplest route) because it was near, and perhaps Klal Yisrael would be frightened by the wars they would encounter and would return to Mitzrayim.

“Rerouting” around Eretz Pelishtim was no minor detour. This travel plan caused about three million people traveling through a desert with all of their worldly possessions not just a delay of a few hours, but many extra days of travel (which later became a forty-year detour).

Fleeing from the Challenge

Hagaon Rabbi Yaakov Yisrael Kanievsky (fondly known as “the Steipler”) explains in his sefarim *Chaye Olam* (Chelek Bet, Perek Tet) and *Birkat*

Peretz that the Torah is teaching us a very fundamental lesson. The Torah is educating us to what extent we must ensure that we do not place ourselves into a **makom nisayon**, a situation where we will be challenged by the **Yetzer Hara**.

Once a person is already in a challenging situation and the Yetzer Hara is able to tempt him to do something wrong, it is much harder to overcome him successfully. The Torah’s advice is to make a detour—do not go there to begin with. Change your route.

This is very applicable in day-to-day life. Many times, we know in advance that by associating with certain people or by going to specific places, we will likely encounter a **nisayon**. We may be tempted to think, say, do, or see things that are improper. We must ensure that we avoid these situations and make every effort to prevent ourselves from encountering the challenge in the first place.

This is especially relevant regarding technology. Ideally, we would not need to go the technology route at all, but if it cannot be avoided, we must ensure that our technology use is filtered in a way that helps us avoid a **makom nisayon**, allowing us to avoid the Yetzer Hara rather than confront him directly.

May Hashem help us learn from this week’s **Parasha** the importance of setting boundaries, enabling us to flee from the “battlefield” of the Yetzer Hara. **Amen.**

The Intention One Must Have During Netilat Yadayim

The Gemara in Masechet Chagiga (18) addresses the case of a person who washed his hands without the intention that this washing prepares his hands for eating bread. Does this washing allow him to now eat bread, or must he wash his hands again with the intention that he washes for the purpose of eating bread? The Gemara rules that with regard to Chulin – ordinary food, as opposed to Teruma or sacrificial meat – this washing fulfills one’s obligation even though he did not have the obligation in mind.

It appears from this discussion the one fulfills his obligation in such a case only Be’di’avad – after the fact. Preferably, however, one should have in mind while performing Netilat Yadayim that he washes his hands to prepare them for eating bread. Accordingly, the Shulchan Aruch rules (159:13) that one should have this intention while washing his hands before eating bread. The Rama (Rabbi Moshe Isserles, author of glosses to the Shulchan Aruch, Poland, 1525-1572) adds that if somebody pours water on another person’s hands for Netilat Yadayim, then it suffices for the one pouring to have the required intention.

Surprisingly enough, the Magen Avraham (commentary to the Shulchan Aruch by Rabbi Avraham Gombiner, Poland, 1637-1683) ruled that if one had no intention whatsoever while washing his hands that he does so in preparation for eating bread, then he must repeat Netilat Yadayim. In his view, washing without any intention for

Daily Halacha

bread does not fulfill the obligation, and therefore in such a case one may not eat bread until he washes his hands a second time. The Mishna Berura (commentary to the Shulchan Aruch by Rabbi Yisrael Kagan, the "Chafetz Chayim," Lithuania, 1839-1933) rules that if somebody in such a case does not have any water with which to repeat the washing, he may rely on the lenient position and eat bread based on the initial washing. Otherwise, however, one should repeat the washing without a Beracha. In his Bei'ur Halacha, the Chafetz Chayim rules that ideally, one who washed his hands without intending for bread should soil his hands so that he will be required to repeat the washing with a Beracha according to all views.

As for the final Halacha, however, we do not follow the view of the Magen Avraham, and accept instead the Shulchan Aruch's ruling that a person in such a case is not required to repeat the washing. Nevertheless, the Magen Avraham's position is indeed very significant in that it underscores the importance of having the proper intention while washing one's hands in preparation to eat bread.

Summary: While washing Netilat Yadayim one must have in mind that this washing prepares his hands for eating bread. If one washed his hands without this intention, he may nevertheless eat bread without washing his hands a second time.

Les voies de la Providence

« Moché étendit sa main sur la mer, et l'Eternel refoula la mer, toute la nuit, avec un vent d'est puissant. Il la mit à sec et les eaux furent divisées. Les enfants d'Israël entrèrent au milieu de la mer à sec, et les eaux formaient une muraille à leur droite et à leur gauche. » (Chémot 14, 21-22)

Peu de temps après que les enfants d'Israël étaient sortis d'Egypte, ils se retrouvèrent bien vite dans une situation extrêmement difficile : le peuple égyptien avait quitté son pays pour les poursuivre, la mer était à leur droite et le désert à leur gauche. En dépit de toutes leurs tentatives pour échapper à l'ennemi, ils se retrouvèrent comme pris au piège, ne pouvant plus avancer dans aucune direction. Plongés dans le désespoir, ils s'adressèrent à Moché pour implorer son secours. Moché se tourna alors vers l'Eternel pour le supplier de sauver Son peuple, afin que les nations du monde ne disent pas qu'il l'avait libéré d'Egypte pour le laisser mourir dans le désert, du fait qu'il ne détenait pas le pouvoir de le faire entrer en Terre Sainte.

L'Eternel écouta les plaintes des enfants d'Israël et ordonna à Moché de tendre sa main sur la mer, afin qu'elle se fende pour les laisser passer à sec. Moché se plia aux instructions divines, et, incroyable mais vrai, les eaux jaillissantes de la mer des Joncs interrompirent soudain leur flot galopant, pour former une muraille de part et d'autre du peuple juif. Certains commentateurs expliquent même que les eaux se sont fendues en douze parties, pour former douze passages, de sorte que chaque tribu traversa la mer

dans le passage qui lui avait été réservé.

Si l'on réfléchit aux faits tels qu'ils se sont déroulés, une question nous apparaîtra de façon flagrante : où ont donc disparu toutes les eaux de la mer ?

On se souvient encore de la nouvelle terrifiante, qui avait bouleversé le monde entier, en 5765 (2005), lorsqu'un Tsunami avait dévasté certains pays asiatiques. Dénormes vagues s'étaient élevées à une hauteur impressionnante, pour engloutir tout ce qui était sur leur passage. Par contre, lorsque la mer des Joncs s'est séparée, les eaux se sont aussi élevées à une hauteur exceptionnelle, sans pour autant noyer les enfants d'Israël, qui les ont traversées. Quoi de plus miraculeux, et surtout lorsque l'on constate les conséquences dévastatrices d'un raz-de-marée ordinaire, qui, en l'absence de miracle, détruit toute vie sur son passage ?

Quoi de plus clair que le Tsunami, comme preuve que c'est le Saint bénî soit-il qui dirige la nature, et que, dès l'instant où Il décide d'en retirer Sa Providence et cesse de lui déterminer des limites – comme il est dit : « Tu leur as fixé des barrières infranchissables » (Téhilim 104, 9) –, tout le monde peut en constater les désastres ?

On raconte de nombreuses histoires au sujet de la catastrophe naturelle qui a eu lieu en Asie. Lorsque j'ai entendu l'une d'elles, je me suis dit que le Créateur désirait, indubitablement, nous secouer pour nous transmettre un message. Au Sri Lanka, il existe un zoo, où se trouvent de nombreux lions, éléphants et damans. Un quart d'heure avant que les vagues du tsunami ne s'élèvent, le zoo était entièrement vide, car tous les

animaux avaient pris la fuite, s'éloignant du lieu du danger. Personne ne comprit ce qui s'était passé. Grâce à un sens particulièrement développé, les bêtes étaient parvenues à ressentir le danger imminent et à y échapper. Il est impossible d'entendre une telle histoire sans s'arrêter quelques minutes pour y réfléchir. Je pense qu'une telle situation, où des animaux ont pu être sauvés, alors que des hommes sont morts, prouve la véracité de l'enseignement suivant de nos Sages, de mémoire bénie. Ces derniers nous enseignent (Sanhédrin 38a) que lorsque D-eu créa Adam, Il lui dit : « S'il est vrai que les bêtes t'ont précédé dans la Création, cela ne signifie pas pour autant qu'elles sont plus importantes que toi. » Toutefois, ce n'est vrai que tant que l'homme est attaché à l'Eternel et à la Torah ; mais, dès l'instant où il abandonne la Torah et les mitsvot, les animaux deviennent supérieurs à lui, du fait de l'avantage qu'ils détiennent d'avoir été créés avant l'homme. Les faits ont démontré que le Saint bénî soit-Il a été fidèle à Ses paroles, en pourvoyant aux bêtes une intuition leur permettant d'échapper au danger, alors que les hommes n'en ont pas eu la possibilité – ceci étant la preuve qu'ils doivent corriger leur conduite et revenir vers D-eu.

Le déluge a ravagé le monde, parce que la terre s'était corrompue. Aussi, le Tout-Puissant désirait-Il prouver aux êtres humains que là où la pudeur fait défaut, Il retire Sa Providence, et de lourdes catastrophes ne tardent pas à suivre. Il est triste de voir tant de personnes tenter d'expliquer cet événement sur des bases scientifiques, refusant d'éveiller la conscience humaine au fait que tout provient des cieux et qu'il s'agissait là d'une punition

divine, en réaction à l'excès de débauche qui régnait en ce lieu. En effet, il est écrit : « Car l'Eternel ton D-eu marche au centre de ton camp pour te protéger et pour te livrer tes ennemis : ton camp doit donc être saint. Il ne faut pas que D-eu voie chez toi une attitude de débauche, car Il se retirerait d'avec toi. »

conjuro, un talismán) para este propósito? ¿Debo decir todos los días algún capítulo especial de *Tehilim*? ¿O quizás debo estudiar algo específico en la Guemará? ¿Qué tengo que hacer?".

El Gaón de Vilna lo miró intensamente y le dijo: "Hay algo que puede hacer. Hay una plegaria especial que puede decir en la bendición *Shemá Koleinu del Shemoná Esré*".

El hombre se desilusionó un poco. "¿Quiere decir que debo rezar para que sean eruditos y observantes durante la bendición *Shemá Kolenu*?".

"No, en absoluto. Esto es lo que debe decir: *lehí ratzón*, que sea Tu voluntad Hashem, D-os mío y D-os de mis padres, que mis hijos no sean ricos. No pida que sean pobres, sólo que no sean ricos. Esa será la mejor protección", le respondió el Gaón.

De acuerdo con el Gaón de Vilna, esta era la *segulá* para tener buenos hijos judíos. Él no estaba diciendo que los judíos ricos de alguna manera sean menos judíos que los demás. Obviamente es posible ser un judío rico y tan erudito y devoto como cualquier otro judío. Sólo que requiere más esfuerzo. La riqueza llega con muchas tentaciones. Para la persona rica, todas las puertas están abiertas y hace falta coraje y determinación para no entrar por algunas que son extremadamente tentadoras. A largo plazo, al mirar hacia las generaciones futuras, ¿qué persona rica puede sentirse segura de que todos sus nietos serán igualmente fuertes y rectos? La experiencia demuestra que no es así. Por lo tanto, la mejor *segulá* para mantener con seguridad a todos nuestros descendientes dentro el pueblo judío, es protegerlos de las tentaciones de la riqueza.

En Shabat Mevarjim, le pedimos a Hashem *jam shel ozher vekavod*, una vida de riqueza y honor. ¿Por qué el Gaón de Vilna

Reflexion Semanal

Sabiduría financiera

(Por Rabbi Frand @aishlatino)

Mientras el pueblo judío estaba ocupado recolectando los tesoros de Egipto, en cumplimiento de la promesa que Hashem le había hecho a Abraham respecto a que sus descendientes saldrían del cautiverio "con grandes riquezas", Moshé buscaba otra cosa. Moshé estaba preparando los restos de Iosef para transportarlos a Eretz Israel. El Talmud (Sotá 13a) elogia a Moshé por tener "un corazón sabio y juntar mitzvot" (Mishlei 10:8) mientras que el resto del pueblo juntaba dinero.

Después de la *Havdalá*, cuando cantamos *Hamavdil*, encontramos la frase "*zareinu vejaspeinu iarbé kajol*" - "que nuestros hijos y nuestro dinero se incrementen como la arena". El Gaón de Vilna alteró el texto para que se lea: "*zareinu uzejuioleinu*" - "nuestros hijos y nuestros méritos". El Gaón comentó: "Esta no es una plegaria judía. Nosotros pedimos una manutención decente, no pedimos riquezas".

Una persona le preguntó al Gaón de Vilna: "Yo quiero asegurarme que todos mis hijos, nietos y bisnietos sean judíos estudiosos y observantes. ¿Cómo puedo lograrlo? ¿Hay alguna *segulá* (un

no objetó también esta expresión como una "plegaria no judía"? ¿Por qué pedimos riqueza si es algo tan peligroso?

Hace muchos años, conocí a un judío que acababa de regresar de Jerusalén. Al estar allí, había visitado a una familia que consistía de dos padres y once niños que vivían en un pequeño departamento de una sola habitación. Él me dijo que no podía imaginar cómo una familia podía vivir así. También expresó su asombro por el respeto excepcional con el que los niños trataban a sus padres y a sus hermanos. Finalmente, me comentó que el departamento estaba limpio y ordenado, un lugar digno. Fue una de las cosas más sorprendentes que había visto en su vida.

Sin ninguna duda, esa familia no tenía una gran cuenta bancaria. No tenían acciones ni inversiones. Pero su estilo de vida por cierto era de "riqueza y honor". No podría haber sido más cierto si hubieran vivido en una enorme mansión.

Una persona puede tener millones de dólares sin tener una vida de riqueza y honor. Quizás su esposa se queja constantemente, sus hijos lo vuelven loco y todos pelean. ¿Acaso eso es una vida de riqueza y honor? ¿Qué diferencia hay si tiene un millón de dólares si todos están constantemente quejándose y nunca nada es suficiente? Por otro lado, es posible tener once hijos, vivir en un departamento de una habitación y disfrutar de "una vida de riqueza y honor".

Nahalot

Nahala of Rabbi

Itzhak Abi'hssira the 14th of Shvat

Rabbi Its'hak Abi'hssira was the son of Rabbi Ya'akov Abi'hssira and notably the uncle of Baba Salé. He is the author of the liturgical poem "A'oufa Echkona," which he composed at the age of 12. While he was studying Torah regularly with his father, one day he arrived late because he had been writing this poem. When he reached the place of study, his father questioned him about his lateness. But after reading the words of the poem, the Abir Ya'akov replied: "For such a song, I accept your being late." Naturally, this poem contains priceless secrets of Kabbalah, to the extent that his descendants devoted pages upon pages of commentary to it.

Anecdote

On one of his journeys, Rabbi Its'hak traveled to a village near Marrakech. Upon his arrival, all the notable figures of the village came out to greet him, but Rabbi Its'hak did not see the man who usually hosted him.

He asked the assembled crowd about him, and since he received no satisfactory answer, he decided to visit him personally, accompanied by all those who had come to welcome him.

When they entered the house, they found the man distraught and curled up in a corner. When the Rav asked him, surprised by his behavior, he explained that the Arab governor of the village had ordered him to deliver a large sum of money that very evening, failing which he would be put to death. That was why he was afraid to leave his home. Rabbi Its'hak reassured him, encouraged him not to change his way of life, and told him to trust him.

The time for the Minha prayer arrived, and the Rav invited everyone to pray. Before beginning the prayer, he asked

that the person who blows the shofar on Rosh Hashanah be brought in. When the man arrived, the Rav asked him to stand ready to blow the shofar. After they finished the Minha prayer, the Rav said to him:

"Blow!" He began to blow, but in vain—no sound was heard. At that moment, Rabbi Its'hak took the shofar himself and said (with the Arab governor in mind):

"This wicked man has had a long life!"

He then blew the shofar and afterward declared:

"It's finished, everything is settled. Now we can sit down to eat."

During the meal, there was a knock at the door, and the host panicked, thinking of his enemy. The door was opened, and the homeowner was relieved to see that it was a close friend who had come to bring extraordinary news: the governor had been sitting with his family at that very hour when suddenly he collapsed, struck by a bullet of unknown origin. Those present were astonished to discover that the time of the governor's death coincided exactly with the time of the shofar blast...

Following this miraculous event, the people present doubled and even tripled the donations they had originally planned to give to the community of Rabbi Its'hak, of blessed memory.

The Hiloula in Toulal

Rabbi Its'hak passed away on the 14th of Shevat, 5672 (1912), and is buried in Toulal. His Hiloula is celebrated in a grand manner by thousands of Jews, especially French-speaking ones. Despite the freezing cold at that time of year and the particular geographic location (more than 700 kilometers from Marrakech), several thousand people come to pray at his grave, from which a unique spirituality emanates.

Segulah

A very powerful segulah that has proven itself, recognized within the Abi'hssira family. And yet, I am not usually a fan of segulot. To do—and to share!

1. To be done on the 14th of Shevat, during the Hiloula of Rabbi Its'hak Abi'hssira
2. Obtain a bottle of arak
3. Write your prayer or personal request on it
4. Also write: "In honor of the Tsaddik Rabbi Its'hak Abi'hssira of Toulal"
5. Say: "If by this time next year, my prayer has been answered in the meantime, I will organize a meal in honor of the Tsaddik, during which I will give everyone to drink from this bottle and recount my deliverance."

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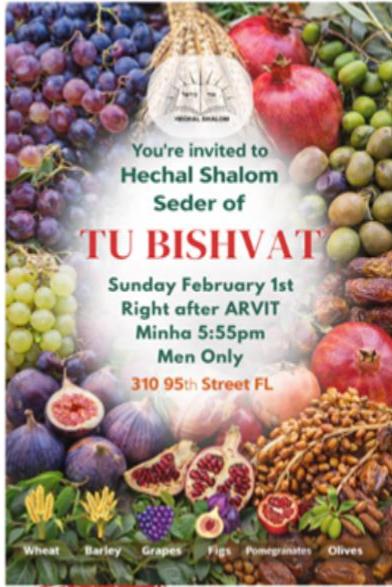
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