ב"ה

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י"ב ניסן תש"פ

מכתב התחזקות (ד)

This year many families are making their own Pesach for the very first time. Young couples who were used to always going to their parents for the Seder, are forced to remain at home and conduct their own Yom Tov and their own Seder. Parents and grandparents, who always enjoyed a house full with their children and grandchildren, are also concerned how their Yom Tov and their Seder will be in an empty home without the input of their children.

When Klall Yisroel brought the Korban Pesach for the very first time in Mitzrayim, the Torah (Shemos 12; 29) tells us that Moshe Rabbeinu instructed Klall Yisroel about how to prepare the korban Pesach. “And Bnei Yisroel went and did as Hashem had commanded Moshe and Aharon, so they did”. Rashi comments that this possuk comes to tell us the praise of Klall Yisroel להגיד שבחן של ישראלthat they did not detract from what they had been commanded by Moshe and Aharon. The Torah also stresses -‘so they did’- that Moshe and Aharon also brought a korban Pesach”.

The Chortkover Rebbe zt”l (in his sefer Ginzei Yisroel) points out that in this Rashi is written a very important lesson which is a great chizuk for all of us in our present situation.

In their eagerness to keep the mitzvos, Moshe and Aharon would normally have been the first to bring the Korban Pesach. The Torah wants to stress that in their great ahavas Yisroel, Moshe and Aharon specially waited to allow everyone else to first perform the mitzvah. Sometimes people do mitzvos because they are influenced by external factors, or they wish to copy their rov or rebbe, and they try to emulate their actions. Although it is commendable to copy the good actions of others, it is an even greater level to perform the mitzvos lishmoh, –just because Hashem has commanded us - and not just to copy the actions of others.

Moshe and Aharon were worried that if they first bring the korban Pesach, some people would run to copy them and then their actions might be lacking in lishmoh and sincerity.

Klall Yisroel had to bring the very first Korban Pesach without the help of Moshe and Aharon, they could not watch their actions and observe how they brought the korban Pesach, the Yidden had to do it all by themselves. This was in order that they fulfill the mitzvah lishmoh, only because Hashem had commanded them and not just to copy the actions of others, and this is the praise of Yisroel להגיד שבחן של ישראל.

Therefore they specially waited in order to allow all of Klall Yisroel to first bring the korban Pesach and only afterwards Moshe and Aharon also brought their own korban Pesach.

Similarly, this year many people will be conducting their Seder on their own, without the help and encouragement of parents or children, locked in their homes unable to see or to hear others, such a Seder is truly שבחן של ישראל “the praise of Klall Yisroel” and shows that we are keeping the mitzvos lishmoh with total sincerity to fulfil the wish of Hashem to relate the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim.

In a similar vein, the Rebbe of Ruzhin zt”l explained the possuk in sefer Yirmiyah (ch 23)

"אם יסתר איש במסתרים ואני לא אראנו נאום ה'" Hashem proclaims “If a person conceals himself in hiding does he think that I cannot see him”?! The meforshim understand this possuk as a rebuke, a person who commits aveiros in hiding, does he really think that Hashem does not see his actions and will not bring him to task? The Rebbe of Ruzhin however understood this possuk in a totally different context which is very apt for our situation.

Sometimes a person is forced to conceal himself, and despite the difficult situation he now finds himself in he continues to keep the mitzvos and daven and learn like beforehand, although he is now cut off from his surrounding and his friends, shul, etc. Says Hashem about such a person אם יסתר איש במסתרים - If a person keeps the mitzvos in concealment, he should not feel despondent, or that he is lacking, rather he should know thatאראנו נאום ה' Hashem looks at him and has much nachas from his mesiras nefesh to keep the mitzvos whilst he is in concealment. This lesson of the Rebbe of Ruzhin is mentioned also in a medrash (Yalkut Shimoni Shemos 7, 180) “If a person learns Torah in concealment does he think I do not see him! I will reveal his actions to all”.

This year many people will be conducting their Seder in concealment, sitting alone by themselves without anyone to see them or listen to them, and about such people it is written "אם יסתר איש במסתרים ואני לא אראנו נאום ה'" Hashem proclaims “If a person conceals himself in hiding does he think that I cannot see him”?! They are not alone, Hashem is watching their Seder and they are the true praise of Yisroel שבחן של ישראל and Hashem will proclaim them to the entire world.

After Avrohom Ovinu had Bris Mila, Hashem came to visit him on Pesach (see Rashi Bereishis 18, 10), yet we don’t actually find that Hashem actually spoke to him during that visit. Explained the Chidushei Harim and Rav Moshe Feinstein zt”l, that Hashem came to observe the actions of Avrhom Ovinu to see how he performed the mitzvos even when he was in great pain. Similarly, every time a Yid performs a mitzvah when it is very difficult for him, the person merits that Hashem comes to watch his actions and to see the mesiras nefesh of His children, how they keep the Torah and mitzvos, even under difficult conditions.

This concept is also mentioned in a letter written yesterday by the Sadigerer Rebbe shlita: “Since from Heaven it has been decreed that everyone make their own Seder in their own home, **the Heavenly Courts desire to watch how we conduct ourselves with true emunah and inner tranquillity and simcha even in times of nisayon**. This period is indeed mesugal for everyone to merit to overcome his yetzer hara and attain an internal geulah, and to elevate his entire household, that his house become a Mishkan Hashem, that even the beams of his house will be able to testify about him “Here lives a Yid”! Thereby the entire house will be worthy of being a home for the Shechinah”.

ידידכם ישראל פרידמן