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מכתב התחזקות (ז)

In this weeks parsha we are told that someone who might have tzoraas has to go to a Kohen "והובא אל אהרן הכהן או אל אחד מבניו הכהנים" who has to then decide if it is tzoraas or not. This possuk has in it a message which is a big chizuk for us in our current situation.

Chazal tell us (מדרש תהלים א, ח) that Dovid HaMelech requested from Hashem, that whoever recites Tehillim, "העוסק בתהלים יהיה חשוב לפני הקב"ה כעוסק בנגעים ואהלות" it should be considered equal to the halachos of tzoraas and negoim.

The meforshim question the meaning of this request, why did Dovid Hamelech ask that Tehillim should be equal specifically to halochos of tzoraas and negoim, and not to some other areas of the Torah?

Explained the first Tolna Rebbe Reb Dovid Twersky zt"l and the Ohr Somaich zt"l, a most beautiful idea. The Torah tells us that when it comes to tzoraas, only a kohen has the authority and is able to declare whether a person is טהור – pure or not. Even if the kohen is a simple and ignorant man, still, only he can decide. In such a case, a talmid chochom has to go with the kohen and he instructs the kohen what to say, but at the end of the day it is only the utterance of the kohen than can and will render a person tomei or tohor.

Dovid Hamelech asked that in the same way as the kohen has the power in his words to change the status of a person, - even if the kohen is ignorant and does not understand the reasons behind what he is saying - in the same way Hashem should accept our recital of Tehillim even if we do not fully understand the meaning of what we are saying. The mere



recital of the words of Tehillim have the power to arouse Rachmei Shomayim and bring refuos and yeshuos.

This is a big chizuk for us all, although we are currently unable to daven with a minyan, and we are missing the hissorerus and the strength of the tzibbur, despite this, our humble recital of the pure words of Dovid HaMelech is precious to Hashem even when said without full kavonoh.

This concept is also written in the Sefer Chassidim (ס' יח): “Our Creator who knows and examines the hearts of all, does not ask only that one be sincere, therefore even if he does not know how to ask correctly, Hashem considers it as if he has asked correctly. Similarly those who sing Pesukei Dezimro in a loud joyful voice, but they don’t know how to say the pesukim correctly without making mistakes, their tefillos and their zemiros are accepted as a pleasant ריח ניחוח and Hashem rejoices over their recital with great joy and Hashem says “how beautifully he is singing according to his understanding and about this it is written ודגלו עלי אהבה (see later on).

We find a very moving medrash (שמות, כא, ד) about the power of every Yid to daven to Hashem. “If a poor person wants an audience with a king, the king is not interested to listen to him, but if a rich and powerful person comes, the king will meet him straight away. But with Hashem this is not so, everyone is equal in front of Hashem, men, women, poor and rich. This is proven by the fact that Moshe Rabbinu the greatest of all Neveim, is described in the same fashion as the most simple Jew. The tefillo of Moshe Rabbeinu is described as תפלה למשה and the tefillo of a poor man is described in the same way תפלה לעני כי יעטוף. ולפני ה' ישפוך שיחו. This is a tefillo and this is a tefillo, to prove to you that all are equal in the eyes of Hashem”.

The Chortkover Rebbe zt”l related that his life was saved by the plea of one lady. As a young man he became deathly ill, and the doctors gave up hope, His father, the first Chortkover Rebbe zt”l came to visit his son, and all were hoping that somehow during this visit the Rebbe would succeed in beseeching the gates of Heaven to spare his one and only child. All ears were focused on the Rebbe as he arrived, hoping to hear some words of comfort and hope. When the Rebbe saw that his son seemed to be literally on his death bed, and his



minutes were counted, he accepted the verdict and said: “Ribbono Shel Olam if this is your wish, I will not say anything, and You should do as You see fit!”

The Rebbe's words hit everyone present like a thunderbolt, they realised the gates of Heaven were closed. One lady who was standing by the side, gave a shriek and exclaimed “Even the Czar ym”'s does not snatch away an only son for conscription into the army!” It was this lady’s heartfelt cry that pierced the heavens, bringing a miraculous recovery for the Rebbe. This is the power of *הלב מן הלב* a sincere and pure tefillo.

In the same way that our tefillos can be answered even when we don’t understand their full meaning, so it is also with limud HaTorah. Normally, Rosh Chodesh Iyar is the day the new zeman starts, and the bochurim go back to yeshiva and the yungerleit to kollel. This year however, things are different, and everyone is quarantined at home. Many are very worried what type of zeman are they going to have, without their chavrusa, without their chaburah and maggid shiur? Learning together in a group is very important for properly understanding the gemara and when one sits alone it is often difficult to concentrate and learn with a geshmak.

Here again the medrash (שה"ש פ"ב א"ב) consoles us: “Said Rabbi Yissocher, it is written *ודגלו* even if a person is sitting and learning Torah and he is *מדלג* “he trips and stumbles” from one halachah to the next, from one possuk to the next, says Hashem about him “How precious he is to me”. He is precious to me even when he was unable to understand the pshat in what he is learning”. *ודגלו* Hashem loves him even if he trips and stumbles.

Indeed, during times like this it is difficult to learn with proper concentration. Rabbinu Chaim zt”l the brother of the Maharal of Prague, writes in his introduction to his sefer HaChaim that he wrote during a plague:

“I want to mention all the kindness that Hashem has performed for me during these times, how He redeemed me from death during a plague. I and my family remained at home and for almost two months our door remained locked, without anyone going in or out. The trials and worries of the time took away my ability to be able to delve into intricate and complicated sugyos, which need much clarity of thought. But cholilah for me to sit idle of Torah either,



which is a shield against the Angel of Death. Therefore I decided to delve into the portion of Agodo to replace the לאגה –worry- with אגדה”.

The days of Sefiras HaOmer are the time when we should be preparing ourselves for Kabbolas HaTorah with more intense learning, but although we are unable to learn in the way we normally do, we should not feel disheartened. The first Strikover Rebbe Reb Zev Landau zt”l, made the following observation. The medrash that we quoted above mentioned that even if a Yid is unable to daven and to learn properly and he trips and stumbles, Hashem still loves him and exclaims about him ודגלו עלי אהבה.

The gematria of the word ודגלו – to trip and stumble- is 49. This is to be mechazeik and remind us that even if we have tripped and stumbled during the 49 days of the Omer, unable to daven and learn in the way we normally do, still Hashem still proclaims about each and every Yid ודגלו עלי אהבה How precious he is to Me!

ידידכם ישראל פרידמן