

gave Shabbos HaGadol its name of "the big Shabbos".

The Tur brings down (Orach Chaim, siman 430) that on Shabbos HaGadol, the Yidden took a lamb, the *avodah zarah* of the Mitzrim, and tied it to their bedposts. The Mitzrim gritted their teeth in anger and frustration, but were otherwise completely powerless to do anything to stop the embarrassing desecration of their beloved idols. This was an open miracle that occurred through *tefillah*; the Yidden asked Hashem, and He saved them.

Another *nes* that occurred at that time is brought down in the *medrash* (Medrash Tehillim on perek 136). The *medrash* says that when the Mitzrim found out that all their *bechorim* were going to die, all the firstborns went to their fathers and said, "Everything that Moshe has said thus far has come true. Don't you want us to live?! Let the Jews leave already! If not, we are all going to die!" The fathers responded, "Even if every single Egyptian needs to die, there is no way we will let the Jews leave Egypt!" Seeing that their pleas were falling on deaf ears, the *bechorim* then turned to Pharaoh himself and argued that he should let the Jews leave. "They just bring troubles upon us!" they argued. However, Pharaoh also turned a deaf ear and commanded his servants to expel the *bechorim* from the palace premises. At that point, the firstborns all unsheathed their swords and began to fight back. They were fighting for their lives and had nothing to lose. They killed their fathers, "למכה מצרים בבכוריהם". The firstborns killed a total of 600,000 Egyptians during that period.

We see the tremendous *nissim* that took place all in the merit of the Yidden's *tefillas*. Moshe Rabbeinu came and taught the Yidden that they are able to talk to Hashem. They didn't know this before, and once their eyes were opened up to this amazing opportunity, they began heeding his advice, thus bringing about such amazing *nissim*. This is why this Shabbos is called, "Shabbos HaGadol".

Heeding This Advice in Golus

During *golus* Mitzrayim, our *seichel* was in *golus*. The Yidden didn't know the tremendous *koach* that lay in their hands. They didn't know how much they are able to accomplish through *tefillah*. Then, Moshe Rabbeinu came along and taught them that they can talk to Hashem in their own words and ask Him for everything they need. When the Jews indeed began to talk to Hashem, the *geulah* began, and we were *zoche* to the special upcoming *yom tov* of Pesach. The word, "פסח" is made of up of the words, "פה סח", the mouth speaks. When the Yidden began speaking to Hashem, they merited the *geulah* and the *yom tov* of Pesach.

Therefore, this is a most opportune time to redouble and renew our efforts in talking to Hashem and asking Him to take us out of our personal *golus*, our individual Mitzrayim. We should ask Hashem to help us recognize our strengths and to know that He loves us indefinitely. We need to ask Him to help us know that we can accomplish anything through *tefillah*; all we need to do is open our

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can't do in order to cool us off when we see that we hit a brick wall. If we try to do things beyond our abilities, we're doomed to failure that will result in us losing our desire to serve Hashem, and we will end up not even doing the *avodah* that we are able to do.

This small *מ* reminds us to curb our excitement and keep our boundaries in place. We should direct our excitement to the things that we are able to do and allow ourselves to be happy with it. We should jump for joy that we have a beard and *peyos*, that we put on *tefillin* every day, that we eat kosher food, that we keep Shabbos, etc. If we allow ourselves to revel in the *mitzvos* that we are able to do, then Hashem will help the advancement of our *avodah* and closeness to Him, and we will become true, *ehrliche* Yidden.

Q&A Breslev

HOW CAN I RETAIN THE TRANQUILITY AT HOME?

Question:

Bein Hazmanim is approaching, and our *bochur*, who learns overseas, is coming home for *yom tov*. He has a difficult nature that makes it very hard for him to get along with people. Everyone usually ends up suffering when he is around. Can the Rosh Yeshiva give us guidance as to how to conduct ourselves with him?

Thank you.

The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...

I received your letter.

Take the Rebbe's *eitzah* of "*azamrah*" (see Likutei Moharan, 1:282), and seek out his positive qualities. Sit down with your wife, think about all the positive qualities he possesses, and as soon as he comes home, find reasons to praise him for those qualities. You must, however, truly believe in him and view him in a positive light. If you do so, you will no longer suffer from him. However, if you place the focus on his difficult nature, he will sense your displeasure and do his utmost to live up to your expectations. If you view him with compassion, you will ultimately see positive change.

(This is the reason we sometimes observe children who are well-behaved at home and act out in school, or vice versa. It seems illogical. But, the reason behind it is this exact concept. At home, the child feels that his parents are proud of him, so he tries to please them, whereas in school he feels that the teacher or Rebbe disapproves of him, so he has no incentive to behave.)

From the minute your son gets home, treat him with respect and boost his ego; in return, his behavior

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mouths whenever we want and ask for whatever we need or want. Hashem is always there and will surely come to our aid.

On Shabbos HaGadol, many people eat the *seudos* in a different place than usual, since their regular Shabbos table is already ready for Pesach. A table is compared to speech, as the *posuk* says, (Yechezkel 41:22), "וידבר אלי זה השלחן לפני ה'". Rebbe Nachman of Breslev says that before Pesach, the table is not in its regular place, i.e., the speech is not being utilized properly. But, on Pesach, we conduct the *sefer* in the proper place. On Pesach we came out of Mitzrayim, and we began speaking to Hashem, thus correcting our speech, and "putting it in place".

It's very easy to get frustrated and uptight when routine is disturbed. Therefore, on Shabbos HaGadol, when we eat at a different table and routines are uprooted and changed, we need to expend extra effort not to get angry. Rebbe Nachman says (Likutei Moharan 1:63) that a person's *parnossah* depends on his ability to remain calm and not get angry, because anger adversely affects a person's income. Therefore, if we want to receive the *parnossah* that we need on Pesach, we must ask Hashem to help us never get angry and to help us remain calm and happy on Shabbos HaGadol.

Speaking to Hashem is a Pleasure

On Shabbos HaGadol, we read the *haftarah* of "וערבה לה". We read this specifically on Shabbos HaGadol, because the *posuk* there says, "והנה אנכי שולח לכם את אליהו הנביא לפני בוא יום ה' הגדול, והנורא". We indeed await the "יום הגדול", when Eliyahu HaNavi will come with the good tidings of Moshiach's arrival. At that time, everyone will speak to Hashem, as the *posuk* says (Tzefanya 3:9), "כי" "אז אהפך אלך עמים שפה ברורה לקרא כלם בשם ה'". When Moshiach comes, everyone will speak to Hashem.

Rebbe Nachman told Rebbe Nosson that when he was in Eretz Yisrael at the cave of Eliyahu HaNavi, he imagined how Eliyahu HaNavi was standing there and talking to Hashem. Rebbe Nosson was very overtaken by the image; it brought him the realization that Eliyahu HaNavi was simply a human being of flesh and blood who became so great and holy because he spoke to and conversed with Hashem. He became so incredibly great that he will be the one to bring the happy, long-awaited news of Moshiach's arrival. At that time, everyone will talk to Hashem and serve only Him.

This is very good preparation for Pesach. When we open the door for Eliyahu HaNavi, we should be able to show that we are internalizing and practicing what he teaches us about talking to Hashem. Then, Hashem will surely take us out of our Mitzrayim.

When we talk to Hashem and live our lives with Hashem constantly with us, we have good, sweet lives. This is how the *haftarah* begins, "וערבה לה", speaking to Hashem makes our lives sweet.

Fortunate is he who uses these auspicious days to refresh himself and begin living with Hashem. He will have a good life both in this world and in the next.

(Sichos Mohorosh, Shabbos HaGadol)

will improve. Rebbe Nachman says (Likutei Moharan 1:202), "When someone has less *seichel*, give him more *kavod*, because the less *seichel* that a person has, the more *kavod* he awaits." If you constantly praise him, he will strive to be better, and he will treat you and your wife with respect.

I reiterate, with the method of "*azamrah*" you have a strategy that can succeed; when a child feels that his parents believe in him, he will do everything in his power to please them. It is a method that both parents and *mechanchim* can use to succeed with their charges. As the Rebbe concludes, (Likutei Moharan 1:282), "He who finds only the good qualities in every *talmid* is suitable to be a Rebbe, because he will generate that his *talmidim* will want to learn and daven.

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

(Adapted from "The Light of Emunah" pg 248)

The Power of Tefillah

Pesach preparation were in full-swing, and the *simcha* pervaded our home together with the hullabaloo of removing all the *chometz* from between our four walls. The house was more-or-less completely unrecognizable beneath the layer of Mr. Clean and bleach, and everything was topsy-turvy, being taken out of closet, drawers and cabinets only to be replaced a few minutes later, minus the *chometz* components.

Of course, as in every Jewish home, the spirits were high, but so was the stress. We try so hard to make Pesach preparations fun and enjoyable with the least stress and frustration possible, despite the children undoing everything that we just finished doing. Realizing that the *yetzer harah* was trying very hard here, we turned our eyes heavenward and begged Hashem to help us retain the calm and happiness in our home during this special, high-stress time.

A few days later, the fruits of our toil were beginning to show. With smiles still on our faces (though, I'll admit that those smiles definitely took a few breaks...), our kitchen was ready for Pesach! What an accomplishment! The *chometz* was cordoned off in the corner of the dining room for the time-being, and we *kasher*ed the sinks, stove and oven, covered the counters and cabinets, and cheerfully declared our kitchen "Pesachdig". Thank you, Hashem, for keeping those smiles on our faces and the bounce in our step!

The next week, we went to purchase all the Pesach groceries necessary for the cooking. The first item we needed was grapes for home-made grape juice,

The Rebbe's Life Story

The informer was a conniving fellow. He had pretended to be a *chassid*, insidiously engaging the Rebbe in talk of *chassidus*, until he was sure the Rebbe was convinced of his piety. Meanwhile, the Rebbe was not fooled, he just played along. The Rebbe manipulated their conversation until he was able to convince the informer that a leader such as he ought to be humble and pious, praying on behalf of his suffering fellow Jews. The Rebbe persuaded him to recite Tehillim every day. "This will be a sign for me that you are free of arrogance: if you will tearfully recite several chapters of Tehillim in my house, in the presence of several young men."

Eager to prove himself, the imposter began chanting verses of Tehillim, while copious tears flowed from his eyes. When he was finished, he felt terribly weak.

Meanwhile, the people of Teveria were in desperate need of funds from abroad, but there were guards posted at every entrance to the city to accost anyone who was bringing money, because the informer had notified the Pasha that vast sums of money were pouring into the city from abroad.

While the informer was out of commission, Rabbi Yitzchok was sent to Haifa to pick up the money from the messengers who had come from abroad. He brought the money to the Rebbe, who distributed it among the needy.

When the informer recovered from his weak state and learned what had occurred, he was so furious that he threatened revenge. However, before he had a chance to execute his evil scheme, he fell ill and died. The Rebbe was delighted to have played a central role in this event, for, thanks to him, everyone was able to return home, resulting in great joy for all.

After this event the Rebbe visited the gravesite of his grandfather, Rabbi Nachman of Horodenka, in Teveria. Then they hired donkeys and set out for Miron, together with a group of young men, to the gravesite of the tanna Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. When they entered the cave the Rebbe instructed his companions to pray and study the Zohar, while he himself did nothing at all, merely appearing to be extremely joyous.

to be continued next week, bez"H...

known as "*must*" - a main staple on our Pesach table. Knowing that sometimes, towards the end of the day, the grapes are all sold out, we quickly asked Hashem to send us the grapes we needed to get our *must* made. At the register, we requested the grapes, only to be told that they weren't sure if they still had what we needed. The grocery store worker went to the back to check what they had in stock, and we continued asking Hashem to please send us the grapes that we needed. Within a short time, the worker was back with everything they had left ... exactly what we had ordered! Thank you, Hashem, for preparing those grapes and putting them on the side special for us!

The next afternoon, we began the process of "*must-making*". We began when the children were still awake so they would be able to watch and be part of the fun, but then took a break as we saw things getting rather hectic. *Must* is made better when the grapes get pressed, not eaten... After the children were in bed, we continued the washing, pressing, sifting, cleaning, pouring and freezing. Generally, the process takes a few days at absolute best. But, we knew that Hashem was waiting to hear from us. So, we turned to Him and asked that it not take too long or be too strenuous.

Although we didn't believe our eyes, by the time the night was over (admittedly a bit later than the usual night...), there were nine-and-a-half bottles of home-made grape juice sitting in our freezer, awaiting their presentation at our *seder* table. With high spirits and a bounce in our exhausted step, we thanked Hashem for His clear intervention that made our *must* ready for consumption in only one night!

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