



Va'era 5777

January 27, 2017

A Taste of Torah

The Other Horse

by Rabbi Eli Mozes

Rabbi Chaim of Sanz was one of the greatest Chassidic leaders of the 19th century. He would regularly have long lines of people waiting to talk to him about every possible problem and difficulty, looking for advice and a blessing. No one was turned away from his door, and he patiently listened as they bared their troubles.

One of the strangest encounters Rabbi Chaim had was the day that Yankel came. Yankel had a grocery store in town and was someone who had always seemed to make a decent living. But today he just looked miserable.

“Rebbe,” he said, “you’ve got to help me! Everything I’ve been working on for years is going down the drain.”

“What’s the matter?” inquired the rebbe. “Rebbe, do you know how long it took me to establish my grocery? For five years, I saved the money for a down payment, and even then, it took me another five years until I had built up a customer base and was able to turn a profit. Thank G-d, all of my hard work paid off and I was finally able to support my family in dignity. But now, that rotten no-goodnik Berel has opened a grocery just across the street. His store is newer and fancier than mine and he is offering sales at unsustainable prices, just to drive me out of business! Rebbe, if you don’t help me, all my life’s work will be in vain, and I will have to resort to begging to sustain my family.”

Rabbi Chaim sat silently, feeling Yankel’s pain. Finally, he replied, “Yankel, don’t worry! Your lot shall soon change; I bless you with an abundance of sustenance.”

Yankel paused and said, “Rebbe, thank you so much, but there is one more thing I would like to request: Can you curse Berel for having the *chutzpa* to

try and drive me out of business?”

“I am sorry,” said Rabbi Chaim, “but I have never cursed another Jew in my life, and I don’t plan on changing that.”

Yankel wouldn’t take a no. “At the very least, can you say that that he will see no success from this enterprise?”

The Rebbe laughed and said, “Yankel, let me ask you, from where do you get your merchandise?”

Yankel’s face lit up, as he loved to talk shop. “Well, there are several fairs in the region which I travel to. For every item I sell in my store, I know where I will get the highest quality product at the lowest price.”

“And how do you bring your merchandise back to the store?” inquired the rebbe.

“Why, I hire a wagon with a driver to accompany me.”

“Tell me,” said Rabbi Chaim, “have you ever noticed that when the horse stops at a river to take a drink, he first kicks at the water before he begins to drink?”

Yankel thought for a few moments and replied, “Now that you mention it, I believe that you are right, but I can’t figure out why they do that; it’s the strangest thing!”

“Allow me to explain,” said the rebbe. “When the horse first bends down to drink, it sees its reflection and thinks that there must be another horse coming from the other side, attempting to drink his water. When it kicks at the water, it disturbs the surface and no longer sees ‘the other horse,’ and only then does it actually begin to drink. When you think about it, the horse is doubly-foolish. Even if this really was another horse, there is plenty of water in the river for both of them; how much more foolish is

Stories For The Soul

Fire of Faith

based on a story on revach.net

Rabbi Yosef Yoizel Horowitz, known as the Alter (Elder) of Novardok (1847-1919), was once sitting in a cabin in the woods learning Torah. His only source of light was a candle which was almost at its end. Reb Yosef Yoizel was worried that he would be forced to stop learning, but he strengthened himself with thoughts of *bitachon* (trust in G-d). He had strong faith that Hashem could provide a solution for him, even in this isolated location. He walked to the front of the cabin, opened the door, and was startled to see someone approaching him from the woods. The stranger handed him a candle and disappeared into the woods.

Reb Yosef Yoizel, who never discovered the identity of the stranger, saved the candle stub for twenty-five years. He viewed it as proof of the miracle, a reminder of what could happen if one places his full faith in Hashem.

Eventually, a fire engulfed Novardok and destroyed the candle. Reb Yosef Yoizel viewed this as a sign that there was no need for tangible proof of the reality of living with faith in Hashem. He felt that his initial excitement over the miracle of the candle was a lack of faith. A person with true *bitachon* should not be fazed by such seemingly unexplainable incidents. Instead, one should be constantly cognizant that nature itself is miraculous, and miracles can be natural.

The miracles of the Exodus implanted in the Jewish People the realization that Hashem runs the world and can do as He pleases. Though we do not experience these kinds of miracles in our time, that realization has been passed down through the generations and millennia, and it is incumbent upon us to nurture and develop that truth.

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Kollel Happenings

KOLLEL 19TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION FEB. 28TH

The Kollel will celebrate 19 years of bringing Torah learning, Torah teaching and Torah living to Denver on Tuesday, Feb. 28th, 6:30 pm, at Aish Denver. Rabbi Daniel and Adina Krausz will receive the Betzael Award, and the Kollel will mark the opening of its new Southeast Torah Center and its temporary West Denver location. To reserve or place an ad in the commemorative journal, email journal@denverkollel.org, visit denverkollel.org, or call 303-820-2855.

GOVERNMENTAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST THIS WEDNESDAY AT 4T

Join Ben Figa, Assistant City Attorney for the City and County of Denver and previously Deputy Legal Counsel for the Office of Governor John Hickenlooper, and Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher, Senior Educator for the Denver Community Kollel, as they explore governmental conflicts of interest. February 1st, 12-1:15 p.m. at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$25. RSVP info@denverkollel.org.

LEARN 2 LEARN

You have long dreamed of acquiring the tools to achieve proficiency in learning Gemara on your own. But how? The Denver Community Kollel offers a comprehensive, step-by-step, level-by-level program crafted for people just like you. All you need is the ability to read Hebrew; we will teach you the rest. For more information, contact rmh@denverkollel.org.

Increase Your Jewish IQ

By Rabbi Yaakov Zions

Last week we asked: How is it possible for one to skip *Ya'aleh Viyavo* during *shacharis* on Rosh Chodesh and not be required to repeat the prayer?

A: 1. If the person leading the services forgot *Ya'aleh Viyavo* during his repetition, and only realized after the completion of the prayer, he can rely on *mussaf* (where Rosh Chodesh is mentioned) and need not repeat the *shacharis* repetition. 2. If the leader forgets *Ya'aleh Viyavo* during his silent prayer, he need not repeat

the prayer, as he will pray the *shacharis* repetition with *Ya'aleh Viyavo*. 3. If one skipped *Ya'aleh Viyavo* at *shacharis* and already recited *mussaf*, it is questionable whether *shacharis* should be repeated. (Sources: Orach Chaim 126:3-4 and Mishna Berurah 422:4)

This week's question: What is the source of the recitation of *Az Yashir* in our daily *shacharis* prayers before *Yishtabach*?

To submit an answer to Rabbi Zions, email ryz@denverkollel.org.

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Yosef Caro- Bais Yosef Part X

Rabbi Yosef wrote his commentary on the Tur drawing on 32 different sources of both Sephardic and Ashkenazic origin. He analyzes these opinions, discusses them, and renders practical decisions. The work established Rabbi Yosef as the preeminent halachic authority of his time. Although of Sephardic descent, his incorporation of many Ashkenazic scholars meant it was relevant to the Ashkenazic communities, as well.

The *Bais Yosef* also incorporated halachic ruling based on passages in the Zohar, a Kabbalistic authored largely to the Tanna Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. While there had been some controversy as to the origins of the work, the prevailing opinion has been that it is indeed the work of that venerated sage of the Mishna; its inclusion in the *Bais Yosef* cemented its status as a force in Jewish life and law.

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it when the other horse is nothing more than a mirage! Now look at what the outcome is: Had the horse not kicked at the water, it would have remained pure and clean. However, after the kick, it has raised up mud and debris and is left drinking muddy water. That horse may seem foolish to you, Yankel but you are that horse. Exactly how much money you will make this year has been determined on Rosh Hashana, and nothing Berel does can change that. As far as your livelihood goes, the specter of Berel taking away your profits is nothing more than a mirage. Your instinct to lash out at Berel will do you no good and will only leave you drinking 'murky water.' Remember, the river is large enough to slake both horses' thirsts, and I can assure you that Hashem has enough to provide for both you and Berel."

In this week's parsha, we are introduced to the *makkos*, the miraculous punishments which Hashem dealt the Egyptians. The commentators point out that they were not just there to exact justice from the Egyptians; they were also there to teach us that every occurrence and every detail of every occurrence was directed by Hashem with an exact reason. As it says, "And Hashem will make a miraculously sharp division between the property of Israel and the property of Egypt." (Va'era 9:4) This lesson from the Exodus must be carried within us always, for through this we are always secure. We would have a much happier and more peaceful existence if we would just open our minds and realize that there is no other horse; Hashem is personally taking care of my needs and I have nothing to fear - but fear itself.