

The Torah Any Times

from TorahAnyTime.com

Rabbi Zechariah Wallerstein zt"l The Power to Yield

There was once a big tzaddik who continuously davened and fasted to Hashem that He reveal to him in a dream where his seat in Gan Eden will be. In whose company will he reside?

One night, an angel appears to him and tells him, "Yankel the simpleton will be your chavrusa (study partner)." The tzaddik awoke in a shock. It couldn't be! How could Yankel, such a simple Jew, be his very own chavrusa! Without thinking about it further, he decided that he'd make a special trip to visit Yankel and discover for himself just what kind of person he was. Eventually he arrived at the village, after which he was directed to a certain store where he was informed that he'd be able to find Yankel.

Locating the store, the tzaddik entered inside and came across a man. "By any chance, are you Yankel?" he inquired. "Yes I am," came the reply. "Can I ask you something. What do you do in your life that is special? Something that will earn you a very high place in Gan Eden?" Yankel, a simple man and caught off guard by the question, began thinking. "I don't know... I just own a business and I'm honest... I give the poor people different prices than the rich people and I give tzedakah..." Hearing this, the tzaddik began growing very uncertain. "And... what else? Do you do anything out of the ordinary?" "I don't know..." carried on Yankel.

Silence settled in between Yankel and the tzaddik. "But now that I'm thinking about it, I do remember something that happened many years ago..." The tzaddik came to attention.

"There was a group of bandits and they were making their way through the town. Sitting off to the side, though, was a young girl who was crying. Noticing this, I went up to her and asked why she was crying. She told me that she is Jewish and that she was kidnapped from another town. She was scared that these bandits would kidnap her again and sell her to non-Jews. She pleaded that I help her.

"Hearing her desperation, despite the fact that I did not have a lot of money, I paid the ransom to keep the bandits from taking her away." But there was more to the story. "What then did you do?" asked the tzaddik of Yankel.

"I took her home and raised her as one of my children." "And what else?" prodded the tzaddik. "Well," continued Yankel, "when it came time for her to get married, I decided that I am going to give my son to her.

"I approached my son, being that she had no family, and said, 'I want to ask you a favor. Would you mind being her chassan? I know that she has no family and there is no dowry or anything else, but it would mean a lot to her if you would become her chassan.' The son, very respectful and admiring of his father, agreed right away. Yankel proceeded to gather to-

TheTorahAnyTimes is a publication of



Compiled and Edited by Elan Perchik

IN THIS ISSUE

Rabbi Zechariah Wallerstein
zt"l
The Power to Yield
Rebbetzin Chaya Sora
Gertzulin
It's About Time
Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser
Tears at Night

DEDICATIONS

L'iluy Nishmat
R' Elchonon Yaakov z"l ben R' Shmuel
Pinchos
Manish ben Esther
Meir Eliyahu ben Yaakov Dov
Bechor ben Rivkah
Shlomo Zalman ben
R' Mordechai Yisroel Tzvi
Esther bat
haRav Avraham Halevi zt"l
Moshe Simcha ben Doniel Dov Ber
Miriam bat Yeshayahu
Malka Bracha bat Shimon Chaim
R' Zechariah Shimon ben Yitzchok
L'refuah Sheleima
Deena bat Shoshana
Chaya Raizel bat Dena
Yerachmiel Eliyahu Ben Esther Riva
Reuven ben Rochel

gether whatever he could and prepare for her a beautiful wedding.

“During the wedding itself, I walked around from table to table, and noticed how everyone was enjoying themselves except for one table. At that table, no one was eating. ‘Why aren’t you eating?’ I asked. ‘You see that boy over there?’ one of the men said. ‘He doesn’t stop crying. We lost out appetite.’

“I then approached the boy and asked if everything was alright. ‘Is the food not good enough?’ I asked. ‘Do you need money or clothing? Whatever it is, I’ll give you! I want you to be happy at my children’s wedding!’ But the boy remained insistent. ‘I can’t be happy at this wedding,’ he said, flatly. ‘Why can’t you be happy?’ I asked. ‘Because the kallah that your son is about to marry, when she was younger, her parents made a deal with my parents that when we get older, we will get married. She is really supposed to be my wife.’

“I couldn’t believe it. ‘Are you sure its that girl?’ I asked. ‘I’m sure,’ he confirmed. ‘I come from the town where she was kidnapped and I have a letter that her parents and my parents made an agreement.’ Immediately, the boy took out the letter and handed it to me. I was shocked. I didn’t know what to do. I had the entire marriage prepared and my son was about to walk down to the chuppa. And now I held onto a paper that told me that another boy was supposed to marry her!

“I got up and went over to my son. ‘A while ago,’ I said to him, ‘I came over to you and asked if you would do a favor for me. Would you marry this girl? You agreed. Now, I need to ask you a bigger favor. There is a boy here now and he just showed me a paper that he is meant to marry this girl, your future kallah. So I need you to allow him to walk down to the chuppa and marry her instead of you.’ My son looked at me and said, ‘If that’s what

you want, no problem.’

“That night, I walked that boy and that girl down to the chuppa. I gave the chuppa and wedding to the boy who had been crying. I then arranged for them to have sheva be-rachos and live with me for a year.”

This story is mentioned by the Me’am Loaz in Parshas Bamidbar. It’s an amazing story. This man could have come up with every excuse to not give this boy the kallah as his wife. He had already prepared the entire wedding for his son, and now someone random is going to marry the girl, and on top of that, he is going to cover all the expenses!

Often, people who are marrying off their children will help cover part of or the entire cost of a wedding taking place the same night that their own children are getting married. What is the difference between that case and the story told here?

When it comes to writing a check for someone else, it is very different than when it comes to something personal with you and your family. At your own child’s wedding, giving up your own personal interests and benefits is very difficult. The middah of vatranus—foregoing or giving in—is the act of removing yourself from the situation at hand.

How do we develop this important quality?

I’d like to suggest three ways.

First and foremost, enter “third person” mode. Don’t look at the situation as being personal to you. A student of mine was once asked by his wife to pick up two cans of string beans from the store. When he returned home, he handed her two cans of asparagus. She was fuming. “Rabbi Wallerstein, I don’t understand, how could he make such a mistake! Doesn’t he care about me!” While the husband should have been more conscientious, how can she handle such a situation which riles up her emotions?

Think of it in the third person. Imagine a friend of yours calls you with the very same problem you are facing. “I sent my husband to get string beans and he came back with asparagus.” How would you react? You would think that it’s very funny. “But no, the fact that he did this means that he doesn’t love me!” she insists. “No,” you would respond. “He loves you and cares about you. He wasn’t thinking and he made a mistake.” (The actual matter of fact was that this boy’s mother had always taught him to take the cans that are placed toward the back of the shelf because those are fresher. The boy, in fact, wanted to do something thoughtful). When you thus place yourself in the shoes of a third person, it’s a very different story. It’s also helpful to actually ask a third person their opinion about the matter.

Secondly, hakaras hatov. When we recognize the good that someone else has done to us, we dissolve and disappear. We feel so thankful and appreciate for what the other person has done—whether it be our father, mother, spouse, child, rebbe, or anyone else—that we remove ourselves from the picture. We do not think about ourselves in a selfish manner, but rather, just to the contrary. We don’t take anything for granted and don’t ask as if anything is already coming our way and we are entitled to it. When you have hakaras hatov, you can yield to others and you can give in. You are filled with a feeling of everything other people have done for you and what Hashem has done for you, and that takes up the room inside yourself that there is not any room to think about yourself. You dissolve.

Thirdly, wait. Don’t react right away. In the above scenario of the husband and wife, had she waited

for her husband to explain himself, she would have been more understanding as to why he acted as he did. A good definition of vatrunus is to yield, and when you yield, you stop and let the other person go. When you approach a yield sign, not only do you stop, but you stop and let the other car pass in front of you.

You don't go first; you go second.

When we take upon this valuable middah, we hold the power to create miracles, because when Hashem sees us breaking our own nature, He too will extend beyond the natural realms of the world and intercede on our behalf in a miraculous way.

As we take to heart the lesson of Ti-

sha B'av this year, let us appreciate the immense importance and blessing this quality of vatranus brings into our lives and allow it to become a truly embedded characteristic of our own.

Rebbetzin Chaya Sora Gertzulin

It's About Time

The Three Weeks. The Nine Days. Tisha B'Av. Times of mourning, one following another, each one recalling the increased pain of our nation. And then, following Tisha B'Av is Shabbos Nachamu. The Shabbos of Comfort and Consolation.

How quickly we segue from the darkness of mourning to the light of morning, the joy of nachamu.

This week's haftara opens with the words "Nachamu, nachamu ami, Be comforted, be comforted, my people, yomar Elokeichem, says your G-d." Chazal teach that when Yeshayahu said these words, he was asked if the consolation was limited to the generation that lived through the churban, those who witnessed the destruction of Yerushalayim.

The prophet responded, "I came to comfort all generations, as it is written 'yomar – says' your G-d, and not 'said' your G-d." Nachamu, nachamu, words of comfort then, words of comfort now.

Nachamu, nachamu, be comforted, be comforted. Who among us can say that their life is worry and problem-free? That

they never experienced pain and suffering? So many shattered dreams and hopes. So much heartache.

We live in a world where everyone at one time or another had "something". A world where we need nachamu, HaShem's comfort and consolation. Within the word nachamu, we can find the word macha, to erase. As Yeshayahu writes (25:8) "U'macha Hashem dima, HaShem will wipe away all tears, me'al kol panim, from all faces..."

"Macha" can also be found within the word "simcha", happiness. Simcha is spelled sin-mem-ches-hei. Simcha can also be read as sheh'macha, meaning to erase. When HaShem comforts our soul, we find the strength to continue on and find simcha in our lives.

The gemara teaches that man should strive to emulate HaShem's ways. "Mah hu rachum, just as HaShem is merciful, af atah rachum, so too should you be merciful." Perhaps one of the messages from this week's haftara is that just as HaShem comforts His people, so too, we should be a source of comfort and consolation to others during their time of need.

I recently spotted a bumper stick-

er from the "Thank You HaShem" movement that said it all. "Be the one to put a smile on someone's face today!" Give a kind and encouraging word, a compassionate and comforting thought. Daven for someone with all your heart and soul, and really feel someone's pain.

Comforting someone isn't about the 'Olympics of Suffering', it's not a matter of 'can you top this' in terms of difficulty, saying "my problem is bigger, or I know someone who has it even worse". I remember my grandmother, Mama a"h, saying that no one should have tzoris, problems. It doesn't lessen one's pain to hear that someone else is also suffering.

We are now in the month of Menachem Av, the Consolation of Av. Av means father. We daven that the Av, our Father above bring us the consolation that only a father can.

This Shabbos, we read parshas Ve'eschanan. "Ve'eschanan el HaShem, And (Moshe) pleaded to HaShem." Moshe prayed and prayed. The gematria, the numerical equivalent of the word v'eschanan is five-hundred-fifteen, telling us that Moshe beseeched HaShem five-hundred-fifteen times to enter Eretz

Thank you for reading this edition of The TorahAnyTimes Newsletter. If you've enjoyed, please let us know – we'd love to hear from you! Email info@torahanytime.com.

Yisroel. Moshe always davened for Bnei Yisroel, turning to HaShem, asking for the needs of the people. He placed the needs of the people first and foremost in his life. Moshe was even ready to forego having his name written in the Torah when davening for Bnei Yisroel's forgiveness after the tragic episode of the Golden Calf.

V'eschanan has within it the word "chinam, for free". Moshe is davening – please, let me enter Eretz Yisroel chinam, for free, even if I'm not deserving.

Years ago, I taught a group of young children from homes that were not yet religious. Not knowing what their future connection to Jewish learning would be, I taught the girls about light bentschen, candle lighting. They were only six or seven, but I wanted them to know that there is a Shabbos, and one day they will light candles. That with

HaShem's help, when they will be mommies, they will light and pray for their families. A little girl raised her hand and asked if she could pray for herself. I couldn't help but smile, and told her that of course she can.

Like Moshe who davened for Bnei Yisroel, we too must turn to HaShem and daven for our family, daven for our loved ones, daven for those in need. And, as Moshe davened for himself, so too must we daven for ourselves.

Moshe knew that he wouldn't be entering Eretz Yisroel, but he kept on davening. Five-hundred-fifteen times. Rabbi Moshe di Trani, a sixteenth-century Kabbalist, teaches that from here we learn the purpose of prayer. Each and every time we turn to HaShem, we reaffirm our belief that He is the one and only who can answer our tefillos. With each tefilla, Moshe became closer and closer to HaShem.

This Shabbos, Shabbos Nachamu, Shabbos V'eschanan, we should turn to HaShem and daven. Daven like Moshe. Storm the gates again and again. Daven that we should experience a true nechama. Nachamu, nachamu, a double consolation. The Midrash tells us that the double expression of nachamu is meant to symbolize consolation both in this world and everlasting consolation in the World to Come. Consolation for the destruction of the first Bais HaMikdash, and consolation for the loss of the second Bais HaMikdash. Consolation for all the pain that our nation endured in the past. Consolation for the pain we are living with in the present.

Nachamu, nachamu, for our families, for ourselves. HaShem, it is time for true comfort. Take us from sadness to joy. From aveilus to simcha. May all our tefillos be answered.

Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser

Tears at Night

The Gemara (Berachos 32b) tells us that even though the Gates of Prayer are closed, the Gates of Tears are never closed. In Megillas Eicha (1:2), we moreover read, "Bacho tiv'keh ba'lailah—She cries bitterly in the night." The Meshech Chochmah writes that there are two types of crying. One is a cry which takes place during the day and is heard by others, prompting them to come to our aid. But then there is a cry at night. It is a cry which goes silently into the night. It is a cry filled with anguish and pain. But while that cry may not reach the ears of others, it reaches the heavens. It reaches Hashem.

When we cry over the Beis Ha-

mikdash, it is a "cry at night," wherein we beseech Hashem to come to our aid and rebuild the Beis Hamikdash with the coming of Moshiach.

A father who had a young son who was very ill came to the great R' Mendel of Vorker. "Please, Rebbe," he pleaded, "my son is so ill and needs a refuah sheleimah." After thinking to himself for a moment, Rav Mendel replied. "I'm sorry, but all the gates in Heaven are closed." Heartbroken, the father began to sob. Leaving the room of Rav Mendel of Vorker, he started making his journey home.

Sometime into his trip, he suddenly heard the sound of horses from behind. Looking around, he noticed that it was a carriage carrying Rav Mendel of Vorker. Rav Mendel immediately

jumped off the carriage and yelled out to the father, "Shalom aleichem! You know that I just told you that there is nothing I cannot do. But it's not true! There is something I can do. I can cry with you." Together, they both sat down beneath a tree and began crying.

Amid the hear-rendering sobs pouring from them both, Rav Mendel eventually remarked, "Because of our tears, your son will have a refuah sheleimah." Rav Mendel of Vorker then added, citing the words of the Gemara, "Even though sometimes the Gates of Prayers are closed, the Gates of Tears are never closed."

When we cry from the depth of our hearts, we open up a channel in Heaven that holds the power to effect the greatest change, even overturning the pangs and pains of exile and yield the Third Beis Hamikdash.

TORAHANYTIME is the world's largest yeshiva without walls currently spreading 10 million+ hours of Torah learning every year through web and mobile app (Android+iOS). TorahAnytime is free for all users and exists solely on donations from great people just like you.

To share in this great merit, donate online at www.torahanytime.com/#/donate. By check: TorahAnytime 151 Camp Hill Rd. Pomona NY 10970