

The Torah Any Times

from TorahAnyTime.com

Rabbi Avrum Mordche Malach

Shaking the Tree

Rav Uri of Strelisk, a renowned tzaddik, was known for his intense and passionate davening, which often lasted for hours. His prayers were so powerful and filled with so much emotion that even the non-Jewish farmers in the surrounding areas could hear his voice echoing through the fields. The farmers, familiar with his routine, would sometimes remark to one another that it was getting late because they could hear the Jewish Rabbi already reciting, "Yachid Chai Ha'Olamim" toward the end of the morning prayers. Remarkably, they even knew how to quote this sacred phrase.

One day, while R' Uri was davening with his usual fervor, the governor of the city happened to visit the shul. He was struck by the sight of the Rabbi's passionate prayers and the intensity with which he prayed. After observing for a while, the governor turned to those around him and remarked, "If after such a prayer your Messiah has not come, he is never going to come."

Later, when the prayers were finished, one of the Chassidim approached R' Uri and informed him of the governor's comment. Rabbi Uri responded with a smile and shared the following parable:

Once, there was a king who went for a walk in the forest. During his stroll, he came across an enormous tree, the thickest he had ever seen. The king commanded his servants

to cut it down, but in those days, without modern machinery, removing such a tree was no easy task. The method involved tying the tree with thick ropes, attaching the other ends to sturdy poles, and then shaking the tree repeatedly. Over time, this would weaken the tree until it eventually fell.

However, this particular tree was so immense that no amount of shaking seemed to work. For generations, people tried to bring the tree down, but despite their best efforts, it remained standing.

Years later, a group of teenagers came across the tree during a walk in the forest. They saw the ropes still tied to it and decided to give it a try. To everyone's amazement, after just a few shakes, the mighty tree finally toppled. The entire city was astounded that two young boys had succeeded where so many before them had failed.

An elderly man, witnessing the event, remarked, "When I was a young boy, my father told me that his father had tried to take down this tree and that people had been working on it for generations. But it wasn't these boys who brought it down—it was the accumulation of all the efforts over the years. All it took in the end was one final shake."

R' Uri concluded, "So too with the coming of Moshiach. So many Jews throughout the generations—Tanaim, Amoraim, Rishonim, Acharonim—have all been shaking the

TheTorahAnyTimes is a publication of



Compiled and Edited by Elan Perchik

IN THIS ISSUE

Rabbi Avrum Mordche Malach
Shaking the Tree

Rabbi Zechariah Wallerstein zt"l
A Look at Life

Rabbi Aryeh Kerzner
Tears of Royalty

Rabbi Eliyahu Maksumov
Fight Fire with Fire

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

tree, so to speak, with their prayers and good deeds. In the end, when Moshiach finally comes, it won't be because of one grand act, but because of all the small, persistent ef-

forts that have built up over time. We are now in the days after Tisha B'av, in the month of comfort. We must remember that even the smallest good deed, every small act of restraint or

kindness, brings Moshiach closer. The final redemption is almost here. We just need a few more small efforts, and with Hashem's help, we will see the complete redemption soon.

Rabbi Zechariah Wallerstein zt"l

A Look At Life

Let's go down a series of thoughts, one by one, and see where it takes us.

It is a sobering thought and one which we tend to want to avoid because it demands that we examine our thoughts and actions and every aspect of our life. But if we truly wish to internalize the meaning of the opening words of our Parsha— "See, I have placed before you today blessing and curse," we must understand what this blessing is and why we're living. It might seem strange to view our life in the following way, but if we genuinely think about it, there is truth to it. And we must ask ourselves, at least once in our life, the hard questions and look at the answers with honesty.

So what's your whole life about? Let's begin.

You go to school, right? Now, why do you go to school? To get a degree. Why do you need a degree? To make money. Why do you need to make money? To buy food. And why do you need food? To keep your body going.

But why do you need to keep your body going? So you can go back to work. And why do you need to go back to work? To make more money. To buy more food. In between, you need to sleep to give you the energy to go back to work, to make money, to buy food.

Life has a lot of meaning. That is something we know. But the above picture can't be it all. Because if so,

what do we have at the end of life?

Researchers have done the equation—and it's very depressing—calculating how many hours you sleep during your life and how much food you eat. If you live to be 78.8, you eat 73,646 pounds of food in your lifetime. But in the end, when you die, how much do you weigh? If everything's good and you didn't die of any sickness, maybe 170 or 180 pounds if you're a man. Your whole life, you're working and working, making money, eating fries, burgers, steaks, going to the best restaurants, enjoying cakes and chocolate. You're eating to live and living to work to make money to eat.

At the end, after collecting thousands of pounds of food, they put you in the ground, and you weigh 160 pounds. All that eating, and where did it get you? And then, who gets to eat that 160 pounds of food that you finally put into the ground? It's a difficult thought to contemplate, but we cannot deny the truth that life is.

So, what did you do with your whole life? The average person watches 3,639 movies in their life, but what do they get from it? You worked hard and left your children multiple buildings and lots of money as an inheritance. And sometimes, when this happens, some family members will react, "Finally, we got all these buildings and we can make a profit."

So what is a person doing in this world? You worked so hard—went to college, killed yourself to get a degree—for what? What do you

work 10, 12 hours a day for? To fill your closet with clothes? 30 pairs of shoes, 30 dresses, 3 mink coats or 14 suits, 20 ties, 19 shirts. And after 120 years, they put you in the ground, wrapped in a little white thing that doesn't even have pockets. That's not fashionable and it certainly won't make it into any magazine. You don't even have a choice in the style. It's just plain white linen. No white on white, no blue on white, no special collar—and they won't even give you pockets because you can't take anything with you anyway.

So all the clothing in the closet ends up in a plastic garbage bag and gets donated to the Salvation Army. And then someone in Haiti is now wearing the clothes you worked so hard to buy. A whole family in Haiti is walking around in your clothes. It's good that someone else who needs the clothing is benefiting from them, but what does it give you? That's the question. You don't even end up with that. What do you have? You come in with nothing, and you go out with nothing.

No matter how much you collected or how big your closet is, you go out with nothing. No clothing, no money, no food—nothing.

At this point, I know you're thinking, "Wallerstein, are you here to totally depress me? We're all going to the game right after this!" But it's not me doing this to you—it's the Torah. In Parshas Mishpatim, the Torah tells us about the law of a Jewish slave: "Im b'gapo yavo b'gapo yei'tzei—If you

enter (servitude) alone, you leave alone (upon being freed)." However, "Im ba'al isha hu v'yatza ishto imo—If you're the husband to a wife, then your wife will leave with you."

The commentaries interpret these words as follows. There are two ways a person can live their life. One way is you enter this world alone and you leave this world alone. True, you may have enjoyed some

luxuries along the way, but if you do not obtain and take hold of that which is truly valuable, then you will exit just as you entered—alone. However, if you are the "husband to a wife," if you become attached to that which is spiritual meaningful in the realm of Torah, mitzvos, chesed and a relationship with Hashem, then you will exit this world accompanied by those accomplishments. Those spiritual com-

modities—those mitzvos—will accompany you to the Next World.

But nothing else will. The proof? Shrouds have no pockets. No physical commodities can be taken with you. Only mitzvos and maa'sim tovim (good deeds).

That's what escorts you. That's what matters. That's what goes with you, and stays with you.

Forever.

Rabbi Aryeh Kerzner

Tears of Royalty

In this week's Parsha, the Torah records a rare preamble to one of the prohibitions.

The Pasuk (Devarim 14:1) begins, "Banim atem L'Hashem Elokeichem—You are children of Hashem, your G-d." The Pasuk then continues, "Lo tisgodedu v'loi tasimu korch bein eineichem l'meis—Do not mutilate or place a cut between your eyes over one who has passed away." Here the Torah instructs us not to overdo it when we mourn someone who has passed.

Why does the Torah specifically introduce this prohibition with the phrase, "Banim atem L'Hashem Elokeichem"? Why is this introduction given here and not elsewhere in the Torah? What is the connection between these two parts of the Pasuk?

Rashi provides an incredible foundational principle regarding the nature of a Jew. The Torah is underscoring why it is necessary not to overreact when mourning a loved one. "You are children of Hashem, your G-d." Hashem is the Mel-ech Malchei HaMelachim (King of kings), the ultimate example of royalty. Therefore, as His children, we

must behave accordingly. Royalty has certain standards, a certain prestige and dignity. If you are a ben Mel-ech (a child of the King), you must maintain control over your emotions; you cannot overreact when someone dies. The Pasuk is telling us that because we are royalty, we have high standards to live up to. Therefore, we must keep our composure, maintain our equilibrium, and control our emotions.

I once heard from a friend an interesting incident that took place when Princess Diana died. During her funeral procession, which streamed live across the globe, her two young sons, William and Harry—one ten years old and the other twelve—were told right before the funeral started, "Make sure you don't shed a tear, even once, during the procession." This was the royal protocol: to remain in control of their emotions, even in the face of such a tragic event.

Imagine being a young child, having just tragically lost your mother, and being told that you cannot cry. This is the protocol of royalty: they don't lose their composure, they don't cry.

This idea is not precisely parallel

in Yiddishkeit, as we are guided to engage in 'Shlosa Lebeche (three days of intense mourning), and we do cry. And in fact, there is nothing wrong with shedding a tear when someone dies. But the concept is something we can extrapolate: we are Bnei Melachim (children of royalty), and because of our high standards and stature, we must keep our composure, maintain control of our emotions, and not overreact when something goes wrong.

One of the family members of Rav Shmuel Kamenetzky shlita once reflected on the levaya (funeral) of the great Rosh Yeshiva of Philadelphia, Rav Elya Svei zt"l. Rav Shmuel himself eulogized Rav Eliya Svei, his longtime partner at the helm of Yeshivas Philadelphia. During this emotional eulogy, however, Rav Shmuel did not break down in tears, but he kept his composure throughout. However, a few weeks later, Rav Shmuel received an anonymous letter from a student of the yeshiva, expressing disappointment that he did not show more emotion during the hesped.

But, as Rav Shmuel's grandson commented, Rav Shmuel believed that at the moment of leading the Jewish community, it was essential to maintain control over his emotions. Even during something as

Daily Giving

dailygiving.org
(743)-B-A-GIVER
224-4837

Join more than 18,000 Jews around the world!

Your single dollar of tzedaka can make huge impacts when combined with thousands.

\$19,126
Donating Per Day

\$17,831,201
Donated Since 2019

\$6,980,990
Donating This Year

emotional as a hesped for a great man, Rav Shmuel exhibited a certain Malchus (royal nature). He was truly a Ben Melech, and for that reason, he remained in control.

Rabbi Dovid Orlofsky once shared that after the Holocaust, there was a certain royalty that every Jew felt. Those who survived and had the opportunity to rebuild felt that Klal Yisrael needed them. Every individual believed that if Hashem had

saved them, it was for a purpose—to contribute to the rebuilding of the Jewish people post the Holocaust. There was a sense of royalty in knowing that you were spared to fulfill a specific purpose.

However, there does exist a drawback in our current generation. Despite the tremendous growth of the Jewish community and the exponential increase in Torah study, many of us don't feel

that same sense of individual royalty and responsibility. We don't always feel that inherent, innate power and privilege that comes from being a part of Klal Yisrael.

"Banim atem L'Hashem Elokeichem— You are children of Hashem, your G-d" applies regardless of the number of people in our community or number of schools. Being a child of Hashem is inherent; it's who we are at our core, in our DNA.

Rabbi Eliyahu Maksumov

Fight Fire with Fire

The story of the Mann Gulch fire, set in a remote valley along the Mississippi River in Montana on August 5, 1949, is a sorrowful tale. It was a hot, dry, and windy day when lightning struck a dead tree in the forest, igniting a fire. Fifteen firefighters were air-dropped into the valley, led by their chief, Wagner Dodge. The drop into the valley was challenging, and their gear was scattered across the area. By the time they gathered everything and made their way to the fire, the winds had intensified, causing the fire to spread rapidly.

Realizing the imminent danger, Dodge made a quick and unconventional decision. He pulled out a lighter and started setting fire to the grass in front of him. The other firefighters were confused and didn't understand his actions. With a fire already approaching from behind, why would he create another fire in front of them? Uncertain of Dodge's strategy, they continued to try to outrun the advancing flames.

Dodge, however, had a plan. He continued to burn the grass in a small area around him, creating what is known as an "escape fire." Once he had cleared the area, he

placed a wet cloth by his mouth, laid down face down, and waited. When the main fire reached his position, there was nothing left for it to consume, so it passed around him, sparing his life. Through this quick thinking, Dodge managed to save himself, though tragically, thirteen of his fellow firefighters did not survive.

The story of the Mann Gulch fire tells of tragedy, but also of survival and provides a lesson in preparation and strategy. Just as Dodge fought fire with fire to survive, such is how we overcome personal challenges. In battling the Yetzer Hara, the evil inclination, by eliminating the areas in our lives that it can feed off, we thereby make it easier to resist temptation and overcome spiritual challenges.

It's difficult to overcome a test when the Yetzer Hara comes with all his ammunition. It's hard to take on a challenge when it feels like we're under the clutches of the evil inclination. It's hard to overcome such a burning temptation within us.

But we must fight fire with fire. When the Yetzer Hara comes after us with a burning temptation, we have to burn all those areas

that he's feeding off of. If we have a weakness in a certain area, and we know we tend to find ourselves in places we shouldn't be, we must get rid of those areas that are bringing us down. If we do this, by the time the yetzer hara comes around, he'll have nothing to consume, and he'll go around us and right past us.

It's not a coincidence that our Parashiyot have a certain order. Our Parashayot are Re'eh, Shoftim, Ki Tetze, Ki Tavo, Nitzavim. Re'eh means "to see"—we see with our eyes. The next Parasha after Re'eh is Shoftim, and the opening verse of that Parasha is Shoftim v'Shotrim: "You must appoint judges and officers"—guards. We have to guard our eyes. Re'eh, Shoftim, Ki Tetze, we must guard our eyes so that when we go out to war—Ki Tetze le'milchama, Ki Tavo—we will come back intact. In fact, we'll come back standing. Hence, the next Parasha after Ki Tavo is Nitzavim—stand.

We'll be able to overcome challenges by burning all those areas that the Yetzer Hara has a hand in and by getting rid of those places that are bringing us down. We fight fire with fire.

Bring Them Home!

Names of Hostages in Gaza

(Updated: 25 Av)

עידן בן דלית (שתייו)	דורון בת סימונה שרה (שטיינברגר)	אבינתן בן דיצה תרצה (אור)
עמרי בן אסתר ורוניקה (מירן)	דניאלה בת אורלי (גלבוע)	אביתר בן גליה (דוד)
קית' שמואל בן גלדיס חוה (סיגל)	הירש בן פערל חנה (גולדברג)	אגם בת מירב (ברגר)
קרינה בת אירנה (ארייב)	פולין) זיו בן טליה (ברמן)	אוהד בן אסתר (בן עמי)
רום בן תמר נועה (ברסלבסקי)	טל בן ניצה (שוהם קורנגולד)	אוהד בן קרן (יהלומי)
רומי בת מירב (גונן)	יאיר בן רות אידית (הורן)	אור בן גאולה (לוי) אורי בן עינב
שגב בן גלית (כלפון)	יוסף חיים בן מרים (אוחנה)	אפרת (דנינו) איתן בן רות אדית (הורן)
שגיא בן נעמית (חן דקל)	יצחק בן אנטה חנה (אלגרט)	איתן אברהם בן אפרת (מור)
שירי בת מרגיט (ביבס)	יצחק בן דבורה (עידן)	אלון בן עידית (אהל)
שלמה בן מרסל (מנצור)	ירדן בן פנינה (ביבס)	אליה בן סיגלית (כהן)
תמיר בן חירות (נמרודי)	כפיר בן שירי (ביבס)	אליהו בן חנה (שרעבי)
	כרמל בת כנרת (גת)	אלכסנדר בן אוקסנה (לובנוב)
	לירי בת שירה (אלבג)	אלכסנדר סשה בן ילנה לאה
	מקסים בן טלה (הרקין)	(טרופנוב) אלמוג בן נירה
	מתן בן ענת (אנגרסט)	(סרוסי) אלקנה בן רוחמה
	מתן בן ירדנה עינב (צנגאוקר)	(בוחבוט) אמילי תהילה בת
	נמרוד בן ויקי (כהן)	אמנדה פרנסיס (דמארי)
	נעמה בת איילת (לוי)	ארבל בת יעל (יהוד)
	עדן בת שירית (ירושלמי)	אריאל בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו)
	עודד בן בלהה (ליפשיץ)	אריאל בן שירי (ביבס)
	עומר בן ניבה (ונקרט)	בר אברהם בן ג'וליה (קופרשטיין)
	עומר בן שלי (שם טוב)	גד משה בן שרה (מוזס)
	עומר מקסים בן אורנה אסתר	גיא בן מירב (גלבוע דלאל)
	(נאוטרה) עופר בן כוכבה	גלי בן טליה (ברמן)
	(קלדרון) עידן בן יעל	דוד בן סילביה מוניקה (קוניו)
	(אלכסנדר)	

Bring Them Home!

Names of Hostages in Gaza

(Updated: 25 Av)

Oded ben Bilhah (Lifschitz)	Gad Moshe ben Sarah (Mozes)	Avinatan ben Ditza Tirtza (Ohr)
Omer ben Niva (Venkrat)	Guy ben Meirav (Gilboa Dalal)	Evyatar ben Galya (David)
Omer ben Shelly (Shemtov)	Gali ben Talya (Berman)	Agam bat Meirav (Berger)
Omer Maxim ben Orna Esther (Neutra)	David ben Sylvia Monika (Konyo)	Ohad ben Esther (Ben- Ami)
Ofer ben Cochava (Kalderon)	Doron bat Simona Sarah (Steinbrecher)	Ohad ben Keren (Yahalomi)
Idan ben Yael (Alexander)	Daniella bat Orli (Gilboa)	Ohr ben Geula (Levi)
Idan ben Dalit (Shtivi)	Hirsch ben Perel Chana (Goldberg-Polin)	Ori ben Einav Efrat (Danino)
Omri ben Esther Veronica (Miran)	Ziv ben Talya (Berman)	Eitan ben Ruth Idit (Horen)
Yitzchak ben Devorah (Idan)	Tal ben Nitza (Shoham- Corngold)	Eitan Avraham ben Efrat (Mor)
Kieth Shmuel ben Gladis	Yair ben Ruth Idit (Horen)	Alon ben Idit (Ohel)
Chava (Segal)	Yosef Chaim ben Miriam (Ochana)	Eliya ben Sigalit (Cohen)
Karina bat Irena (Ariav)	ben Miriam (Ochana)	Eliyahu ben Chana (Sharabi)
Rom ben Tamar Noa (Brasalevsky)	Yitzchak ben Aneta Chana (Elgarat)	Alexander ben Oksana (Lubanov)
Romi bat Meirav (Gonen)	Yarden ben Penina (Bibas)	Alexander Sasha ben Yelena Leah (Tropanov)
Segev ben Galit (Chalfon)	Kfir ben Shiri (Bibas)	Almog ben Nira (Sarusi)
Sagi ben Naamit (Chen- Dekel)	Carmel bat Kineret (Gat)	Elkana ben Ruchama (Buchbut)
Shiri bat Margit (Bibas)	Liri bat Shira (Elbag)	Emily Tehilla bat Amanda Francis (Damari)
Shlomo ben Marcelle (Mansour)	Maxim ben Talleh (Herkin)	Arbel bat Yael (Yehud)
Tamir ben Cheirut (Nimrodi)	Matan ben Anat (Angrest)	Ariel ben Sylvia Monika (Konyo)
	Matan ben Yardena Einav (Tzangauker)	Ariel ben Shiri (Bibas)
	Nimrod ben Viki (Cohen)	Bar Avraham ben Julia (Cooperstein)
	Naama bat Ayelet (Levi)	
	Eden bat Shirit (Yerushalmi)	