

The Torah Any Times

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Mr. Charlie Harary Sanctified Through Us

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to spend Shabbos at a Sephardi synagogue that I loved for countless reasons. But just before Shabbos, I caught a cold and was worried about having lost my voice. Sitting next to the chazzan, I turned to him and said, "I've got no voice." He looked at me, concerned, and asked, "What happened?" As I explained I'd caught a cold, he listened attentively, asking questions and offering advice. He suggested I take some honey and warm water in the evening, and blow through a straw in the morning to help. Amused, I asked, "Are you a doctor or something?" "I know everything about a voice," he said. "It's my tool, and God gave me a good one; my job is to make it a great one."

Reflecting on his words, I realized his point extended beyond his voice. What's the tool we're each given, our ultimate asset? For us, it's tefillah—prayer. Regardless of whether we feel like we're armed with strength or a pen, whether we're soaring high or feel we're at rock bottom, our primary tool is prayer to Hashem. So how can we transform this tool from something good to something truly great?

Let me share two brief stories about my children, two conversations with two of them. They're simple stories, but they reveal profound truths. The first involved my six-year-old. He approached me

with a list of grievances, clearly feeling that I wasn't measuring up as a father. When I asked him what was wrong, he said, "Daddy, first of all, my brother goes to bed two hours later than I do." Then he added, "Do you know how long two hours feels at night, Daddy? And when I get home, Mommy always bothers me about homework, but she doesn't bother the girls, my older sisters. And when I finally get to eat what I want, you always stop me from enjoying it." Then came his ultimate line, the words every parent has heard: "Daddy, it's not fair."

In households worldwide, children are saying the same words. Somewhere in Israel right now, a child is surely saying, "But Abba, it isn't fair." That's the core argument of every six-year-old. I tried to explain to him that he goes to bed earlier because his brother is ten years older. I reminded him that his sisters don't get nagged about homework because they actually do it. And I explained that too much sugar could damage his teeth, one of his greatest assets. As I walked away, it struck me how much this echoed our own tefillah. We turn to Hashem, saying, "It's not fair." We come to Him with a list, viewing the world through our own lens. "This isn't fair. That person has more. Why do I have to suffer?" And when we finally get something we want, it can feel like Hashem somehow gets in the way.

This mindset doesn't only apply

TheTorahAnyTimes is a publication of



Compiled and Edited by Elan Perchik

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to small grievances, but even to significant issues—illness, tragedies within the Jewish people, challenges facing Israel. These are real and urgent concerns, but they stem from a viewpoint of, “But Daddy, it’s not fair.” Maybe, though, there’s another approach. Perhaps tefillah isn’t only about us seeing the world through our lens, hoping Hashem aligns His will with ours. Perhaps there’s a different way to approach prayer.

I once heard an insight from Rav Avigdor Nebenzahl shlita based on the words of the Nefesh HaChaim (Shaar Beis, Perek 12). He draws from a Pasuk in the Gemara (Berachos 63a), which states: “Anyone who joins Hashem’s name in their distress, his livelihood will be doubled.” This perspective sheds light on the very first instance we find of a tzibbur (community) coming together in prayer. When Moshe Rabbeinu first prayed for the Jewish people, it was after Matan Torah when challenges began to arise. Twice, Moshe stepped up to intercede for Bnei Yisrael and turned back potential catastrophe. The second time, as the Jews were on the brink of entering Eretz Yisrael, fear gripped them. Hashem told them they would have to fight, and in response, they said, “We’re Jews. We negotiate, but we don’t fight.” Hashem reassured them, but the story of the Meraglim (spies) unfolded, and panic set in. The people despaired, longing to return to Egypt.

Eventually, Moshe ascended to plead for Bnei Yisrael. Imagine standing as their defense attorney before Hashem. What plea would

you make? Mercy? That they were fresh from Egypt and understandably fearful? But Moshe’s defense was unusual. His argument was, “If You don’t save them, the Egyptians will say You couldn’t complete what You started. They’ll think You raised this nation but couldn’t bring them to Eretz Yisrael.” Essentially, Moshe argued that this would tarnish Hashem’s reputation.

Why would Moshe’s primary defense be Hashem’s “PR” rather than pleading for mercy? This isn’t about Hashem worrying over the opinions of Egyptians or Canaanites.

Moshe realized something profound: our tefillah isn’t only about what we need or how things affect us. Moshe approached Hashem, not asking for personal salvation or mercy, but saying, “This is for You.” Our prayers elevate Hashem’s Name in the world. Every time we represent Hashem, we sanctify His Name. When there’s suffering or misfortune, it’s not merely a private tragedy; it reflects on Hashem’s world. A tragedy in Eretz Yisrael isn’t only painful for us; it’s a busha—a disgrace—that impacts Hashem’s honor.

I’ll share one more story. A while ago, I was traveling, and my wife had a commitment. With no one available to look after the family, we asked our son to come home early from yeshiva to manage things. We left him with a list of instructions for the younger kids. By the time I returned home unexpectedly early, I anticipated a quiet house. Instead, it was utter chaos. Ice cream con-

tainers were out, kids were running around—no homework, no baths, pure mayhem. After handling things and getting everyone settled, my oldest son approached me and said, “Daddy, I’m sorry.” When I asked why, he explained, “You once told me that you hate coming home from a trip and having to be the disciplinarian. Because I didn’t do my job, you had to be that guy.” For the first time, my child was apologizing, not from his own perspective, but from understanding my point of view.

Moshe Rabbeinu understood this shift in perspective. Rather than approaching Hashem out of self-interest, he prayed from a place of care for Hashem’s honor. The essence of tefillah, according to Nefesh HaChaim, is not only about presenting our personal needs, but also about considering Hashem’s honor. When we see suffering among the Jewish people, we can pray not just for our own relief, but for the sanctification of Hashem’s Name. When healing occurs, when peace reigns, when Jews are safe, we’re uplifting Hashem’s honor.

My bracha to all of us is that in every tefillah, we approach Hashem not as a block to our desires, but as our partner. May we pray for ourselves and for Hashem’s honor, sanctifying His name in all we do. In this way, may we merit to see Hashem’s Name sanctified through us in all good things—peace, health, and joy.

Rabbi Yaakov Rahimi

Pursue Peace

Reb Chaim Zaid shared a remarkable story which took place during one of his seminars. A young woman

approached him, distressed by her difficulty in finding her shidduch, her destined soulmate. She had been searching for many years, still single

despite her efforts.

Reb Chaim Zaid began speaking with her, asking if perhaps there were unresolved conflicts in her life, any grudges or tensions with others that could be affecting her. He gently probed, “Is it possible some-

one is makpid—holding something against you? Have you, even unintentionally, hurt someone’s feelings?” The woman thought deeply and replied, “I don’t think I’ve offended anyone. I try to be kind to everyone.”

However, the conversation lingered with her. When she returned home, she shared Reb Zaid’s words with her parents. After some reflection, her parents recalled an unresolved issue. “You know what,” they said, “perhaps he’s referring to our neighbors.”

The family had been living in the Harnof neighborhood of Jerusalem, where their apartment balconies were positioned next to their neighbors’—close enough that the families shared a visible proximity, even though they lived in separate buildings due to the sloping hills. Years earlier, an intense argument had erupted between the two families, and the conflict had escalated to the point where, during Sukkot, they would even relocate their sukkah to the far side of their porch to avoid seeing each other. The tension had

been simmering for years.

The family recounted the story to Reb Zaid, who responded with a simple suggestion: “Take it upon yourselves to not only forgive, but actively pursue peace. Be a rodef shalom—someone who chases peace. Reach out, ask for mechila (forgiveness), and mend the relationship.”

Though the task seemed incredibly difficult, the family took his advice to heart. The parents approached their neighbors, extended an apology, and asked for forgiveness. In return, the neighbors did the same, and both families reconciled. As a symbol of their newfound peace, they returned their sukkot to their original places, side by side on the porch, as they had been before the argument.

What happened next was nothing short of unexpected.

During one of the Sukkot meals, one family overheard a conversation from the neighboring sukkah. The mother of the single girl happened to hear the other family discussing their son, who had returned

from yeshiva and was looking to find his own shidduch. The mother paused for a moment. Despite the recent tensions, she thought to herself, “We’ve just made peace—perhaps there’s something more to this.” She suggested to her husband, “Maybe we can arrange a shidduch between our daughter and their son.”

The idea took root. The families began working together to arrange a meeting between the young man and woman. They went out on a few dates, liked each other, and to the joy of both families, they eventually got engaged and married.

Such is the power of forgiveness and the blessings that can follow when we seek peace. When we put aside pride and anger, when we forgive one another and actively pursue peace, we open the door to untold blessings. And in the concluding words of R’ Zaid, “Pick up the phone and reach out to someone you’ve had conflict with. Be a rodef shalom—make peace in the world. You never know what good might come from it.”

Rabbi Avrohom Stulberger

Eternal Effect

So much of what we become hinges on what we believe we could become. When we realize the potential for making an incredible difference, and accept that Hakadosh Baruch Hu has given each of us the unique mandate to leave our mark on this world, we understand that each one of us holds an individual mission. Every one of us is shaped by a distinct spiritual DNA.

Just as we each have unique

physical DNA, where even a single skin cell distinguishes us from billions of others, our uniqueness is a profound miracle of creation. Hakadosh Baruch Hu creates countless people, and yet each one is unique. Your physical traits are exclusively yours, and your DNA—the intricate code of who you are—reveals that you are truly one of a kind.

In the spiritual realm, which is far more intricate than the physical,

each of us possesses spiritual DNA. We each come from a piece of eternity, connected to a Divine source that is infinite and unimaginable. This spiritual DNA is as unique as our physical DNA, and it shapes our mission in this world.

So when we encounter messages in media, philosophies, or books that dismiss self-improvement or tell us to accept our limitations without growth, we know that these are fallacious. Bris Milah, performed on the eighth day, is our affirmation that Hashem has given each of us a distinct purpose. Just as we refine ourselves physically, we commit



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to spiritual growth throughout our lives. And that journey of growth never stops.

Each day is filled with new challenges, and that's the beauty of it. Some may see life as monotonous, but life is a series of moments that test us and give us opportunities to respond in ways that reflect who we are. Each moment we face, every decision we make, has the potential to shape us. How we respond to these moments—positively or negatively—reveals our character and our dedication to the unique purpose Hashem has set for each of us.

Let me tell you the story about Yankel the Shochet.

Yankel, a shochet who led a meaningful life, once had a terrifying dream that left him shaken. In the dream, he went to his Rebbe and described waking up drenched in sweat. He told the Rebbe he had dreamt he was in the Next World, facing a grand, heavenly tribunal that was reviewing his life.

In the dream, a white-robed advocate argued that Yankel had lived righteously—he attended shiur, prayed daily, and was a devoted Jew. Surely, he deserved to enter Gan Eden without delay. The Beis Din agreed; they were ready to open the gates. But suddenly, a dark-robed figure intervened, asking to play a different segment of Yankel's life.

The screen showed a scene from Yankel's mid-forties. It was Friday afternoon, and he was rushing out of his shop when a widow approached him in tears. Her husband had recently passed, and she was left destitute, with hungry children. She had finally received a chicken for Shabbos and begged Yankel to perform the shechita. But Yankel was in a hurry—he had mikvah and other preparations waiting—and he brushed her off, leaving her standing there in tears.

The dark-robed figure argued that

leaving a widow like that, especially at such a critical time, was unacceptable. The Beis Din presented Yankel with two choices: either he could return to the world and relive the moment, correcting his mistake, or he would have to undergo a period of Gehinnom to atone. They gave him 20 seconds to decide, and just as he was about to respond, he woke up.

Disturbed, Yankel went back to the Rebbe, who reassured him. Since nothing like this had actually happened in his life, he should dismiss the dream. Yankel resumed his routine, though he was still rattled.

25 years later, an eerily similar scenario played out in real life. Now older and slower, Yankel was leaving his office one Friday afternoon when he encountered a widow. Her face was the same as in the dream. She pleaded with him to help her prepare for Shabbos by shechting the chicken she had obtained after many hardships. But just as in the dream, Yankel refused, saying he was short on time and had not scheduled her request in advance. She stood there, crying, as Yankel walked away.

Later that evening, as Yankel made Kiddush, the realization struck him. He remembered the dream and recognized he had repeated the same mistake. Overcome with remorse, he fainted. When he regained consciousness, he insisted on rushing to the widow's home to make amends. She forgave him, and they were able to share a meal together, bringing some peace to both.

As the story goes, that Shabbos was Yankel's last. He passed away on Motzei Shabbos.

Sometimes life offers us a second chance, but it's up to us to act on it when the moment arrives.

Who knows—maybe that dream Yankel had was more than just a dream. In our own lives, we ought to be mindful of these moments in time, because they can define who we are

and what we do. And it doesn't matter if we're 16, 22, or 75; these moments happen at any age and can arise each day. Every day presents new challenges: how we approach davening, how we interact with friends—all these moments count.

Here's another story that speaks to the profound effect of one act. A man, a Chabad chassid, tragically lost his son in the recent attacks. He was on the plane, on his way to Eretz Yisrael for his son's funeral, grappling with unimaginable pain. As he sat there, he thought, "What can I do for my son?" He knew the mitzvah of putting on Tefillin is significant, so he approached the man next to him. "Would you be willing to put on Tefillin?" The man declined. He asked another person and received another "no."

Then he tried a different approach. He explained to a third passenger that he had just lost his son and was heading to the funeral. He asked if the man would put on Tefillin in his son's memory. This time, the response was different. "Of course," the man said, moved by the father's story.

Soon, others took notice. One by one, passengers who had previously said no came forward, asking to put on Tefillin in the young man's honor. Then, incredibly, the pilot heard what was happening, and he, too, left his cockpit to join the line forming to perform the mitzvah.

We may never know what this act meant for the soul of the young man who passed away. But in that moment, on that plane, his father's heartfelt request inspired so many Jews to connect with a mitzvah. A single moment led to dozens of people fulfilling a mitzvah in his memory, turning one act into an eternity. And the same exists for all of us, each and every moment.

A moment can become eternity.

Bring Them Home!

Names of Hostages in Gaza and Partial List of Injured Soldiers

(Updated: 20 Tishrei)

שמות חיילים פצועים לרפואה שלמה

אברהם מרדכי בן יעל
אהרן בן שרה הנדל
אורי אברהם בן הדסה
אייל אליעזר בן חנה
אלון בן מרים
אלחנן יאיר בן דבורה
אליה בן רות
אלישע יהודה בן רות
אלעד בן שרית
אמיר בן אלה
בנימין בן ריינה
בנימין יצחק בן שרה
בר בן נורית
גלעד איתי בן אפרת
דוד בן זיוה
הראל בן חנה
חיים מרדכי בן שרה איטה
טל גרשון בן שרה
יאיר יונה בן דרורה צפורה מלכה
יהודה אהרון בן מרים אסתר
יהונתן יאשיהו בן כרמית
יהונתן יוסף בן שירה
יוחאי יהודה בן סיגל חוה
יונה בצלאל בן חווה שושנה
ירין אליהו בן סיגל
כפיר חיים בן מירה מרים
מיכאל בן פרידה
מישל בת אנג'ליקה
מנחם דוד חי בן מרים
משה אהרן בן לאה בילא
משה צבי בן עירית
מתן בן דבורה
ניר בן אורנה
עדי מנחם בן מורן מירה
עודד אפרים בן ויויאן
עוז חי בן סמדר
עידן בן טובה
עמיחי בן סיגלית רחל
עמית יהונתן בן מאיה
רואי בן עופרה
רון בן שרון
רועי חיים בן מירב
תום שאול בן דניאל
תומר בן צפורה

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

Bring Them Home!

Names of Hostages in Gaza and Partial List of Injured Soldiers

(Updated: 20 Tishrei)

INJURED SOLDIERS

Avraham Mordechai ben Yael
Aharon ben Sarah Hendel
Ori Avraham ben Hadassah
Eyal Eliezer ben Chana
Alon ben Miriam
Elchanan Yair ben Devorah
Eliya ben Ravit
Elisha Yehudah ben Rut
Elad ben Sarit
Amir ben Ella
Binyamin ben Reina
Binyamin Yitzchak ben Sarah
Bar ben Nurit
Gilad Itai ben Efrat
David ben Ziva
Harel ben Chana
Chaim Mordechai ben Sarah Itta
Tal Gershon ben Sarah
Yair Yonah ben Drora Tzipporah Malka
Yehuda Aharon ben Miriam Esther
Yehonatan Yoshiyahu ben Carmit
Yehonatan Yosef ben Shira
Yochai Yehudah ben Sigal Chava
Yonah Betzalel ben Chava Shoshana
Yarin Eliyahu ben Sigal
Kfir Chaim ben Mira Miriam
Michael ben Frieda
Michelle bat Angelika
Menachem David Chai ben Miriam
Moshe Aharon ben Leah Beila
Moshe Tzi ben Irit
Matan ben Devorah
Nir ben Orna
Adi Menachem ben Moran Mira
Oded Efraim ben Vivian
Oz Chai ben Smadar
Idan ben Tova
Amichai ben Sigalit Rachel
Amit Yehonatan ben Maya
Ron ben Sharon
Roi ben Ofra
Roi Chaim ben Meirav
Tom Shaul ben Danielle
Tomer ben Tzipporah

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