

חזון בני

ו' שבט תשפ"ג פ' בא

CHIZUK IN
THE PARSHA

ולכל בני ישראל היה אור במושבתם
(שמות י"ג)

Chazal tell us that the *Yieden* were not affected by the *מכות* in מצרים. But only in rare instances, such as during *מכת ערוב*, does the *פסוק* explicitly make the distinction. One other such example was during *מכת חושך*, where there was petrifying darkness for the Egyptians but "for all of בני ישראל" there was light. What is the significance of this particular distinction?

ר' ישראל מרוזין זיע"א, the נר ישראל, explains this *פסוק* to be referring to the inner essence of every *Yied*. Just like a diamond deep beneath the ground, encrusted in mud and dirt, is still a priceless diamond, so too a *Yied's* נשמה is pure and precious. Indeed, every morning, each and every *Yied*, regardless of what he's done or where he's been, recites confidently: אלוקי נשמה שנתתה: בי טהורה היא *the soul You have placed within me is pure*. But just like the diamond, it needs to be given a chance to shine. It needs to be brought out, polished and shined, and then placed in an appropriate, velvet setting in order for its full lustre to be appreciated. So too the נשמה, with the necessary polishing and placement, can shine forth brilliantly no matter the darkness that might envelop it.

This was the point of the distinction of *מכת חושך*. While all around there was a heavy fog of blackness, for the *Yied*, for every *Yied* - לכל בני ישראל - there was light.

This idea provides a vital message of חיזוק. There is no such thing as a *Yied* of darkness. Deep down somewhere, במושבותם, there is always light. It just needs to be brought out into the open so that it can shine forth and dispel the darkness...

CHIZUK IN
THE SIDDUR

יהי כבוד (Part 18)

ולא ישחית

And He does not destroy...

The ספר טיול בפרדס explains that the נשמה of each and every *Yied* is deeply connected to its root. The root of the נשמה is no less than הקב"ה Himself and the אור החיים הקדוש describes this connection as being a 'silver cord'.

If, when a person would do an עבירה the connection would be severed ח"ו, we would fall into oblivion and be totally wiped out. Therefore, הקב"ה in His infinite mercy, never destroys the special connection that we have with Him and always keeps us close.

In fact, the משנה in פרקי אבות mentions that there is a בת קול that emerges from הר חורב every single day that can be heard by our נשמה alone. The בעל שם טוב explains that this בת קול has the effect of inspiring us do תשובה.

Whenever we experience a התעוררות, we should know that it is coming as a direct result of this בת קול which is 'picked up' by our נשמה by virtue of the fact that it is always connected to הקב"ה with this 'silver cord'.

Q. WHY DOESN'T הקב"ה MAKE PUBLIC ניסים THE WAY HE DID IN מצרים?

A. JUST IMAGINE THAT EVERY TIME YOU HAD A TEMPTATION TO עבירה, DO AN חס ושלום, YOU WOULD HEAR A בת קול SAYING, 'IF YOU DO THAT, I WILL TURN YOUR WATER INTO BLOOD!' WOULD WE STILL HAVE TO CHOOSE RIGHT FROM WRONG? DID הקב"ה REVEAL TO THE WHOLE WORLD THAT HE AND ONLY HE RUNS

THE WORLD. IN EACH SUBSEQUENT GENERATION SINCE WE DO MANY יציאת מצרים, WE DO MANY תפילין AND SUCH AS קריאת שמע TO CONSTANTLY REMIND OURSELVES THAT ה' IS THE ONE WHO CONTROLS THE WORLD, AND THESE CONSTANT REMINDERS FORTIFY OUR אמונה. BUT IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT WE STILL HAVE FREE CHOICE, ה' DOES NOT PERFORM ניסים ON A REGULAR BASIS.



CHIZUK FROM OUR CHACHOMIM

This Tuesday, ט' שבט, marks the *Yahrzeit* of Rav Eliezer Silver זצ"ל.

He was born in 1882 in Obelai, Lithuania, to Rav Tzemach Bunim and Malka. After learning for 5 years by his father, young Eliezer was sent to Dvinsk where he learned by two of the גדולי הדור of the time, Rav Meir Simcha HaKohen, the אור שמח, and Rav Yosef Rosen, the Rogachover גאון. After a short time learning by Rav Chaim Soloveichik in Brisk, he went on to learn in the קיבוץ in Vilna of Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzensky, from whom he received סמיכה at the age of 24. A few months later he married Batya Valek and the young couple emigrated to the USA a year later to escape the anti-Semitic persecution of Czarist Russia. They settled in New York City where Rav Eliezer worked as a garment salesman.

His גדלות in תורה was soon recognised and he became the רב of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, a position he held for 18 years. He soon became nationally renowned and was amongst a group of רבנים who met President Taft to ask him to void a treaty with Russia due to their persecution of *Yieden*. At the behest of Rav Chaim Ozer, Rav Eliezer set up the organisation עזרת תורה, a relief fund for displaced ישיבות and רבנים during World War I. In 1925, he accepted a position as רב in Springfield, Massachusetts and 6 years later he became the רב of Cincinnati, Ohio. He was pivotal in establishing *Yiddishkeit* in America, becoming President of the אגודת הרבנים in 1929, and helped found and lead the Agudas Yisroel of America.

At the outbreak of the Holocaust in 1939, Rav Silver convened an emergency meeting with רבנים and established the ועד הצלה organisation to rescue as many *Yieden* as possible from Europe. The organisation raised a staggering \$5 million, a fortune in those days, and used all means at their disposal, legal or otherwise, to save thousands of *Yieden* and bring them to America, Canada or Eretz Yisroel. In October 1943, when the Nazi's atrocities became clearer, he organised and led the famous Rabbis March, a group of 400 רבנים who marched to Capitol Hill to protest the inaction of the American government to save European Jewry.

After the war, he was instrumental in rescuing young Jewish children from European nurseries and also set up the Chofetz Chaim Day School in Cincinnati where he remained as רב until his פטירה in 1968.

יהי זכרו ברוך



CHIZUK IN OUR LIVES

Dan Kirschner is a businessman who lives in Silver Spring, Maryland. He grew up non-observant but went to מכון שלמה in ארץ ישראל where he was חוזר בתשובה. He became a close תלמיד of one of the הנהלה, Rabbi Rosenberg. During that summer, Rabbi Rosenberg was giving שיעורים on the מצוה of ציצית and Dan became particularly attached to that מצוה.

Dan's daily schedule was that after שחרית and a שיעור, he would drive the 15-minute commute to work where he would have his first coffee of the day. One morning, he inexplicably had a strong craving for caffeine and despite being just 5 minutes away from his office, he turned off the motorway to buy himself a coffee. As he drove the remaining blocks to his work, juggling his manual car and his coffee simultaneously, the coffee splattered all over his shirt! He went home to change and was horrified to realise that he hadn't put on ציצית that day! He thanked ה' for the amazing השגחה which ensured that he wouldn't go through an entire day without his precious מצוה of ציצית which he would have been devastated to discover at the end of the day.

When he got back to the junction where he had stopped to get the coffee, he noticed for the first time that the junction was called... Four Corners!