

# MESIVTA'S MESSAGE

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## FEATURED TORAH *Message*

Rabbi Shraga Zachai

I heard Rabbi Raphael Wachsman זצ"ל, whose yahrtzeit is this month, speak on the following topic. He discussed how we all know the importance of פלפול חברים for our learning and that discussing things and hearing another's viewpoint in the sugya brings greater clarity. But equally, if not more important, is using this tool in our work in מוסר, our מדות and our השקפת החיים. When used properly, it can be one of the most powerful tools in our עבודת ה'.

He quoted the following: The פסוק tells us that when משה and אהרן were warning פרעה and his officers about the מכה of ארבה, they left abruptly from פרעה, as the פסוק says ויצא מעם פרעה. רמב"ן explains that משה thought the Egyptians would be especially fearful about what this מכה would do to them, and therefore משה and אהרן left abruptly so that the Egyptians could take עצה from each other. In addition, the רמב"ן quotes the מדרש שראה אותם פונים זה בזה, והיו מאמינים כי שיתלו עצה לעשות תשובה. לדבריו. ויצא משם, כדי שיטלו עצה לעשות תשובה. He saw them turn to each other and realized that they were believing what משה had said. He left so that they could talk it out with each other and in turn do תשובה.

*continued on back*

## THOUGHTS *on the* PARSHA

Bentzion Richman, 9th grade

Money, money, money, it's all about money. This is what the Egyptians were thinking about when they pursued Bnei Yisroel. How do we know this? The Pasuk says in Shemos 14:6 - "ואת עמו לקח עמו" - "And he took his people with him." How in the world was Paraoh able to persuade his people to come with him after all that ה"קב had just done to them? Rashi explains that Paraoh convinced them with the words: "אני אשוה עמכם בחלק" - "I will divide the spoils equally with you."

The Egyptian people were essentially undertaking this risky pursuit just for the money, greenbacks, and dollar bills. In fact, the Rashbam says that they brought the best chariots, which must mean they were the wealthy citizens who could afford these extremely fancy chariots. So even the rich people joined in for the money. The rich people! The ones who had all that cash in their houses, were still going for more!

We can learn from this how dangerous money can be. Often, in society, money seems to be all that counts (besides honor.) If we can try to limit our desire for money even a little bit more than our current state, then we will hopefully merit the coming of Mashiach even sooner.

## SPARKS *of* MUSSAR

*Reprinted with permission from "Sparks of Mussar" by Rabbi Chaim Ephraim Zaitchik, Feldheim Publishers*

**Rav Yitzchok Blazer - "Family and Friends"**

Late in life, Rav Yitzchok Blazer (R' Itzele) married a young widow with four children of her own, and she subsequently bore him children.

R' Itzele made every effort to please her. At

night when the baby cried, he would not allow her to get out of bed. Despite his age, he himself rose to take care of the baby. On erev Shabbos he would help her prepare for Shabbos, and he considered that a big mitzvah.

In Jerusalem, where the residents drew their water from a cistern near the house, a neighbor once spotted R' Itzele drawing

the water himself to spare his wife the trouble. The neighbor hurried to help.

"What made you come to help me?" asked R' Itzele.

"I want to do a mitzvah," replied the neighbor.

R' Itzele responded, "I, too, want to do a mitzvah."

## RECENT *Happenings*

Chanoch Fromowitz, 11th grade

This past Motzei Shabbos, two talmidim organized a 3-on-3 basketball tournament for the whole yeshiva. Everyone who wanted to play had a chance to sign up the week before. To be fair, the teams were randomly picked by raffle. After Shabbos (and seder), everyone went to the gym to start warming up. The energy was tremendous, with music blasting and everyone taking the competition seriously.

### FEATURED TORAH *Message* continued

Rav Simcha Zissel Broide in his sefer דרך שם points out that despite the נבואה of what was to come with the מכות and despite what was written on the מטה predicting the משה נבואה, felt that speaking something out with someone else had great value to bring the Egyptians to תשובה. These were all רשעים who were on the same page to hurt כלל ישראל, and yet speaking something out with a friend has the power to transform you. He concludes that this is ultimately the דרך one needs in order to grow in in his מדות.

One of the challenges in not getting involved with חברים is that we tend to see the world and certainly our own הנגות as correct, and it is difficult to see our own flaws. This is true whether it's a discussion

Rabbi Wachsmann generously agreed to give a reward of sushi to the winning team. The rules stated that the team who won and scored the most points in their first-round game got a bye in the second round. My team started the night well, winning the first round and making it all the way to the final game, and then defeating a really good team! All in all, it was really fun for everyone.

in learning or trying to improve ourselves, and certainly when we are in a disagreement with someone else. We can be at the point where we take the importance of פלפול to heart, and the יצר הרע can hijack that as well! We can get convinced of our positions and it becomes so hard to move past them. So what can we do to make proper use of this tool?

There are many ways to work on this particular challenge. One עצה can be found in a גמרא in סוטה and can be used in many areas of our עבודת ה'. When תמר is being brought out to be put to death she says הכר נא, which can be simply referring to her asking if יהודה recognized the סימנים that he had given to תמר. The גמרא says that

she was begging Yehuda: הכר פני בוראך ואל תעלים עיניך ממני - recognize your Creator and don't ignore me. The מהרש"א explains that תמר was saying that even if you deny the story and the סימנים because there were no witnesses, recognize your Creator - because he knows!

One of my roshei yeshiva explained that, of course, יהודה recognized that ה' knew what happened on the deepest of levels. Yet he must have decided that it wouldn't have been right to say that he was the one who was involved with תמר. So, what was תמר hoping to accomplish? He explained that it was obviously a very difficult שאלה for יהודה to pasken and that תמר was telling him to refocus and take his knowledge of "ה' knows" to a higher level. This way he would come out on the other side of the psak, it would tip the scales, and he would admit that he was the one who was involved.

Ultimately, we have to realize that ה' knows the truth. This can be very helpful in two ways: First, by being open to discussing something we may have already decided on, and second, by keeping this mindset at the forefront when we are engaged in פלפול חברים. By doing so, we give ourselves the best chance of arriving at the truth about our decisions and working on improving our middos.

# MAZEL TOV

- Yosef Glassman on his engagement to Ms. Miriam Romanoff from Chicago, IL!
- Mr. & Mrs. Jonny Rush on the birth of their son!
- Rabbi & Mrs. Moshe Chaim Biron on the birth of their daughter!

## ONGOING COMMUNITY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

- SUNDAY NIGHT WOMEN'S MESILAS YESHARIM (ZOOM)
- TUESDAY NIGHT WOMEN'S ORCHOS TZADDIKIM (CHESTERFIELD)
- DAILY AHAVAS CHESSED (WHATSAPP)
- DAILY SHMIRAS HALASHON (WHATSAPP/EMAIL)
- DAILY ORAYSA (WHATSAPP)

*For more information*

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