

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

PARSHAT TETZAVEH

We Believe Because That Is What We Are

This week's Parsha, Tetzaveh, begins, "And you (Tetzaveh) command the Children of Israel, and they should take to you pure olive oil, crushed (lamaor) for a source of light, to kindle a (tamid) constant lamp."

There are many questions that could be asked on this verse.

Usually, when Hashem gave Moshe a commandment to convey, the Torah would say "And Hashem spoke to Moshe, to say," or something similar. However, here there is no such preface, not even Moshe's name, just plain, "And you command." What is the significance by this mitzvah of just saying, "And you?"

It seems from the words, "And you (Tetzaveh) command," that Moshe will be commanding the Jewish people; as if it is his commandment. Isn't it Hashem's commandment?

Then the verse says, "And they should take to you pure olive oil." Why did they have to bring it to Moshe? Isn't Aaron going to be lighting the Menorah?

Then it says, "crushed for a source of light (lamaor)." Why does it use the word lamaor, which means a source of light? Why doesn't it simply say, "I'ha-ir - to illuminate?"

HEALING RESTORES OUR PHYSICAL HEALTH, BUT IT'S THE TRIALS THAT SHAPE OUR CHARACTER.

The verse concludes, "to kindle a constant lamp." The Menorah was only obligated to be lit "from evening until morning," as the next verse clarifies. So why does it say "(tamid) constant?" Rashi explains that sometimes the Torah uses the word tamid (constant) to mean regularly, and in our case,

every night. But we are left with the question: Why use the word tamid in this case, when it could have used a term that actually means regularly or nightly?

And finally, our verse says, "constant," while the next verse says, "from evening until morning." Why does it use both terms? And what is the deeper significance of each term?

Every verse in the Torah can be understood on many levels. For this article, we will explore a deeper meaning of the verse.

In Chasidic teaching, the word for command, tzivuy, or in our case Tetzaveh, is related to the term tsavsa v'chibur, a connection. Here we are talking about the deepest sort of connection to Hashem, as will be explained. And it is Moshe, or the "Moshe" (the leader of the Jewish people) of every generation that brings out this connection between the Jewish people and Hashem. This verse is all about that connection.

It uses the word "v'ata, and you," because it is referring to the essence of Moshe, meaning, that this is an essential part of his purpose as the leader of the generation.

Moshe is called the raya memhemna, the faithful shepherd. Faithful shepherd could be explained in two ways. First, that he was faithfully leading the Jewish people. And second, that he is the one who nourishes the Jewish people with faith.

You may ask: Aren't the Jewish people, "believers the children of believers?" Yes, but that is a general aspect of the Jewish people, and sometimes we only experience it as an external part of our makeup. The job of the Moshe of every generation is to help us internalize it. As it says in the Zohar, "That the faith of above, will be nourished and sustained by your (Moshe's) hand."

Similarly, in the story of Purim, Mordechai, who was the Moshe of his generation, as our sages say, "Mordechai in his generation was like Moshe in his generation," even though during the time of Haman's decree, it was dangerous to learn Torah and do mitzvahs, nevertheless, he held public gatherings to strengthen the Jewish people's faith in Hashem, and to keep them strong in their performance of mitzvahs and Torah study. This was true self-sacrifice for Hashem on behalf of every Jew, brought to the fore by Mordechai, through his teaching.

What was it that Mordechai brought out in them, that they were willing to sacrifice their lives for Hashem?

Jewish people believe in Hashem, and they don't feel that they need proofs. This is because of two reasons. First, because although we don't see Hashem, our souls do. That is why you find that Jewish people sometimes, for no apparent reason, have an awakening, and strengthen their Judaism, because the part of the neshama that sees Hashem flares up. Since they see Hashem, they believe in Him. The problem with this experience is that it is outside of you, your neshama sees, therefore you believe.

The second reason is that the root of our neshamas is one with the essence of Hashem, and that essence is higher than the part of the neshama that sees Hashem. In other words, we are one with Hashem, we believe because that is what we are. This is not outside of you, this is in every part of your being; it is the essential you.

Since we are in a physical body and in a physical world, our essence is hidden and it is possible not to experience it. However, there are two ways for it to be revealed.

The first is when we are under oppression and our Judaism is under threat. That is why it is so common for Jews to sacrifice their lives when their Jewishness is threatened. This is even the case with the least observant Jewish people because it is who we are.

This is what happened during Haman's decree. Crushed under oppression, the intrinsic connection to Hashem was revealed. It



was Mordechai that inspired that revelation through his teachings. Since their essential connection with Hashem was revealed, it brought to the fore true self-sacrifice in every Jew.

This is the idea of "crushed for a source of light," and not for illumination. Because through being crushed under oppression, they revealed their connection with Hashem's essence, which is the source of the light.

This revelation that comes through being crushed, although it is incredible, has its flaw. As is commonly the case, under oppression a person will show his amazing connection to Hashem and tremendous self-sacrifice, but once he finds himself in relative freedom, you don't see it anymore.

This is where a more consistent level of this revelation comes into play. It is the job of the Moshe of the generation to reveal this essential connection, even at times of relative freedom. This is what we learn from the words, "to kindle a constant lamp," to keep the connection open even when we are not crushed under oppression.

Even though we are not crushed under oppression, it is still considered crushed. Because now that the bond with Hashem is revealed, we sense what Hashem really wants. We realize that we don't belong in exile and that we really need Moshiach. This understanding is crushing in its own right.

And this is what happened after the miracle of Purim. As we read in Megilas Esther, "And the Jews accepted what they initially started to do." Meaning, that although they received the Torah on Mount Sinai almost a thousand years earlier, the true acceptance of the Torah happened after the miracle of Purim.

You may ask: Why is it that the generation that stood before Mount Sinai, who was the holiest generation, couldn't complete the acceptance of the Torah, while the generation that experienced the miracle of Purim, which was perhaps the lowest of generations spiritually, was able to complete the acceptance of the Torah?

The answer is, that at the giving of the Torah, they experienced great open revelations and miracles, and they were wowed by the lofty event. So it was more like imposed on them from above. But now they sacrificed to stay true to Hashem and to keep the Torah under Haman's decree. And even after the miracle of Purim, when they had relative freedom, they kept the revelation of their essential connection with Hashem shining. That was all from their own initiative, so it was true acceptance.

The way the Moshe of the generation helps us reveal the essential bond is by providing the initial inspiration, but we are meant to take it and develop it into a constant state. When we do, we raise the Moshe of the generation to a higher level, because he is the head of the Jewish people, and we being the legs, can take him to a place where he can't get on his own.

Now we will be able to understand why they had to bring the olive oil to Moshe. Because through the crushing experience, we bring something new to Moshe that he wasn't able to achieve on his own; we take him to a higher level.

When we develop the connection to Hashem through our own effort, it becomes "constant." But when the revelation is because of circumstances out of our control, like being crushed under oppression, it is only "from evening until morning," during the night, meaning, when the exile is dark, bitter, and oppressive. Because as was mentioned above, as soon as it becomes light, when the oppression ends and a period of relative freedom begins, the revelation is no more.

I often wonder what will I be like when Hashem heals me. Will I revert to how I was before ALS, or will I remain the man I have become due to the crushing I have endured? I hope that I remain the man I have become.

Now that most Jews live in freedom, it is an opportune time to work on revealing our essential bond with Hashem through our own efforts and make it constant. When it will be fully revealed it will permeate every last corner of existence because it is the revelation of the infinite, which by definition is everywhere. That will surely usher in the coming of Moshiach. May he come soon.

"Dear Torah From My Eyes

Hello and peace! I recently stumbled upon this page. I find the story of Rabbi Yitzi very touching and it brings me joy to see someone connecting others with G-D despite any circumstances. I myself have a medical condition which sometimes makes me bedridden in pain for days, so to hear these kind of stories is of great consolation to me. I believe HaShem created our world with goodness and that everything is for the good, even the painful parts in life. I want to thank Rabbi Yitzi for sharing his story and wisdom, and I wish him peace and strength!

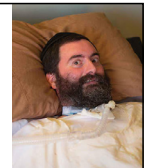
Also, I live in a part of the Netherlands that is quite isolated from Jewish life, so it means a lot to me to have contact with Rabbi's and Jewish communities via digital platforms.

Thank you!"

- Mathijs T, Netherlands

**RABBI YITZI WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO:
(937) 770-4802 | TORAHFROMMYEYES@GMAIL.COM**

Despite facing one of life's most difficult challenges, Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz continues to spread joy and faith to thousands around the globe. Diagnosed in 2012 with ALS, Rabbi Yitzi is now 95% paralyzed and no longer able to speak or breath on his own. Thanks to the miracle of technology, Rabbi Yitzi continues to spread his wisdom through his eyes, focusing on each and every letter of these Torah articles. Rabbi Yitzi, his wife Dina and their seven children are the Rebbe's Shluchim to Temecula, California.



DEDICATED IN HONOR OF THE BIRTHDAY OF

RABBI YITZI!

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