

Kinder Torah

בס"ד

Parashas Miketz

Kah Ribon

"Kinderlach, today we are explaining the zemer 'Kah Ribon.'"

"Abba, 'Kah Ribon' is a difficult zemer to understand because it is in Aramaic."

"We will do our best, kinderlach. Our study of the Gemora, which is also written in Aramaic, will help us. This simple but beautiful zemer was written by Yisrael ben Moshe of Najara. His name is spelled by the acrostic. Yisrael, a *talmid* of the Arizal, praises Hashem without making any mention of the Shabbos. 'Kah' is one of the names of Hashem. He created the world with the letters 'yud' and 'hey' that form the name. Therefore, this name describes Him as the Creator. He remains 'the Master of this world and all worlds; the King who reigns over kings.' We address Him directly when we sing, 'It is beautiful to declare Your powerful and wondrous deeds to You.'"

"What are those deeds, Abba?"

"The zemer continues kinderlach. Day and night, I will arrange words of praise before You, O Holy G-d Who created all life - holy angels, sons of man, animals of the field and birds of the sky. Great and mighty are Your deeds, humbling the proud and uplifting (the spirits of) the bowed (with broken hearts). Even if a man lived thousands of years, he could not fathom the extent of Your powerful deeds."

"This is just awesome, Abba."

"Indeed, kinderlach. The last two verses contain requests for the final *geula* (redemption). 'Hashem, who has honor and greatness, save Your sheep (Klal Yisrael) from the mouth of lions (the countries of the world). Bring Your People out of exile; that nation that You chose from among all the (seventy) nations.' We finish this zemer with the place where Heaven and earth meet. 'Return to the Mikdash and the Holy of Holies; the place where spirits and souls will rejoice and sing songs and praises - in Yerushalayim, the city of beauty.'"

"Why is Yerushalayim called the city of beauty, Abba?"

"Because it contained all of the beauty of the world."

"May we see it again soon."

"Amen!"

Kinderlach . . .

We can praise Hashem day and night, and still not come to one drop of what He deserves. However, this beautiful zemer contains timeless words of tribute to the Almighty. Sing it with great kavannah this Shabbos. This will bring you to a higher level of appreciation of the Creator and His wondrous deeds.

Light up the Darkness

"A bba, the sun goes down so early these days."

"These are the shortest days of the year, Avi."

"These are also the days of Chanukah, Abba."

"Yes, Avi. Not only are they days of physical darkness, but there was a



time when the great spiritual Klal Yisrael."

"Please tell me the story, Abba."

"The Greeks

Greeks caused darkness for

the story,

Greeks

wisdom, Avi. They wanted to gather all of the knowledge in the world, study it, and claim that they were the wisest people. They even wanted to study the Torah . . . as a textbook. Can you imagine that? Talmei HaMelech translated Hashem's Holy Torah into Greek. That was their way of saying that there was nothing holy about the Torah. It was just a textbook in the Greek library."

"How awful!"

"They did not stop there, Avi. Having denied the holiness of the Torah, they now proceeded to uproot Klal Yisrael's *kedusha* (holiness). The Maharal explains that the Greeks claimed that we were no longer Hashem's Holy Nation because we sinned with the *Chet Ha'egel*. Therefore, they launched a spiritual war against us. They made decrees against the observance of our holy day - Shabbos, against the holiness of our bodies - *bris milah*,

and attacked our holiest place - the Beis HaMikdash. They then tried to defile all of the pure oil stored there."

"Why were they so interested in the oil, Abba?"

"The oil burned in the lamps of the menorah, whose light represented the Torah. The windows of the Beis HaMikdash opened outward, because the menorah cast the spiritual light of Torah upon the entire world. We know, and they knew that the Torah is our strongest connection to Hashem."

"Therefore, when the Greeks defiled the Beis HaMikdash and the oil, they were attacking the root of our holy connection to Hashem."

"Precisely, Avi."

"Now I see why we celebrate Chanukah by lighting the lamps, Abba. The miracle of the oil was no small detail of the Jewish victory over the Greeks; rather it was the theme of the whole struggle."

"I could not have said it better myself, Avi. That is why the Rambam calls the mitzvah of Chanukah lights '*chavivin ad meod*' (very, very dear). They celebrate the victory over the forces that tried to sever our special relationship with Hashem. By overcoming them, we came to a new closeness with the Almighty and His Torah. There is nothing more dear to us than that."

"Abba, may our Chanukah lights inspire us to push away the darkness, and illuminate the world with more and more Torah learning."

"Amen."

Kinderlach . . .

Chanukah is a time of renewal. The Greeks tried to cut away everything that was holy, and make the Jewish people into a nation like all the others. We stood up for Hashem's Honor, and in return, He gave us miraculous victories. He fought for us and purified all that was impure. This renewed our relationship with Him. Therefore, kinderlach let us celebrate this Chanukah by strengthening our strongest connection to Him - the Torah. May the lights of Chanukah inspire us to learn Torah with a big bren (fire) and thereby light up our souls, Klal Yisrael, and indeed the world with the light of Torah.

Parasha Question:

- How did Pharoh's sorcerers interpret his dreams? (Rashi 41:8)
- How did the Sar HaMashkim belittle Yosef? (Rashi 41:12)
- What is the meaning of the word, "Avreich"? (Rashi 41:43)

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