

Kinder Torah

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Bring It Back

“What about this gold bracelet?”

“Oh my dear husband. It is so precious to me. You bought it for our anniversary.”

“I see. How about this necklace? Can we pawn it?”

“That is my favorite necklace. I can’t bear to part with it.”

“I understand. However, we will have to decide to part with something. Times are tough. Our fortunes have gone down. I bought all of this beautiful jewelry for you when we were wealthy. We had plenty of money too spare. Now we cannot make ends meet. We must pawn some of this jewelry to raise some money.”

“I am afraid that I will never see these beautiful jewels again.”

The wife begins to cry, her heart breaking

“Don’t worry, my dear wife. We can always redeem them from the pawnbroker. When our fortunes turn around, we will get everything back.”

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Rav Zalman Sorotzkin uses this parable to describe the spiritual fortunes of the Jewish people. We enjoyed times of immense spiritual wealth: *Yetzias Mitzraim* (the exodus from Egypt), and *Kabalas HaTorah* (the receiving of the Torah) on Har Sinai. Every Jew received two crowns on his head: one for *naaseh* (we will do) and one for *nishma* (we will listen). Although we lost those crowns when we committed the *chet ha’egel* (sin of the golden calf), we later found favor in Hashem’s eyes and he granted us another great spiritual fortune – the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle). Alas, we also lost this when the two *Bottei Mikdashim* (Holy Temples) were destroyed. However, these treasures are not gone forever. We only lost the physical *Mikdash*. Its spiritual counterpart rose up to heaven. It is waiting to return; descending in a splendor of fire. It all depends on us. We need to gather enough spiritual wealth to redeem it.

Kinderlach . . .

We are all yearning for that day when the Moshiach will come and the Third Beis HaMikdash will descend from heaven in a ball of fire. We hear many songs about Moshiach. Singing those songs will not necessarily hasten his arrival. Only spiritual riches can make him come. Mitzvos and maasim tovim (good deeds) are the currency that will redeem the Beis HaMikdash.

My Appreciation Grows

“What splendor! What glory! What open miracles!”

“What are you referring to Avi?”

“The dedication of the *Mishkan* at the end of this week’s parasha, Abba. ‘The

cloud covered the *Ohel Moed* (Tent of Meeting), and the glory of Hashem filled the *Mishkan*. Moshe could not enter the *Ohel Moed*, for the cloud rested upon it, and the glory of Hashem filled the *Mishkan*’ (Shemos 40:34, 35).”

“It was an awesome sight.”

“Abba, it was so easy to have *emunah* (faith in Hashem) in those days. Just seeing the *Shechina* (Divine Presence) in the *Mishkan* gave a person such *chizuk* (spiritual strength).”

“True, Avi. We do not have that particular opportunity. However, we have access to sources of spiritual strength that were not available to that generation or any generation before ours.”



“Really, Abba? In our generation? How? Hashem’s face is so hidden.”

“Yes, Avi, however, His Hand is visible in new and wondrous ways.”

“What are you referring to Abba?”

“Let’s take a look at the *Mabim’s peirush* on *Tehillim*. There are two verses in the ‘*Ashrei*’ prayer that illuminate a completely new world to us. ‘Great is Hashem, and highly praised; and His greatness is beyond imagination’ (145:3). The *Malbim* comments that no matter how much we research, analyze, ponder, or contemplate Hashem’s greatness, we cannot hope to understand Him. He is totally above our realm of comprehension. ‘Each generation will praise Your deeds to the next, and shall declare Your mighty acts’ (145:4). In this verse, the *Malbim* reveals to us an astounding fact. Although we cannot understand the Almighty Himself, we can gain an appreciation of Him by observing and studying His creations. This world is filled with plants, animals, and even minerals, which are intricate and complex. They are all the handiwork of the infinitely wise Creator. Each generation progresses in developing more sophisticated tools to observe and understand the sublime wisdom of nature. We have microscopes, telescopes, electromagnetic subatomic particle accelerators, and many other instruments that were not available to the previous generation. With them, we can appreciate aspects of Hashem’s handiworks that they could not. That is the deep understanding of the verse, ‘Each generation will praise Your deeds to the next.’ The work ‘*yishabach*’ is a form of praise that grows and grows. Is it from the same root as ‘*mashbiach*’ – something which gets big-

ger or better. Each succeeding generation’s praises of Hashem’s creations get bigger and better. Why? Because they have the tools to see and appreciate more of Hashem’s previously hidden wisdom in nature. The doctors and scientists who study the intricacies of living beings, see Hashem’s unfathomable *chochma* in every cell.”

“Wow, Abba! How about us? How can we see Hashem in the world?”

“The second half of the verse speaks about Hashem’s *gevura* – His strength to perform mighty acts that transcend the laws of nature. When He wants to ‘overpower’ (so to speak) His enemies, he can nullify the laws of nature and perform a miracle. Our generation can appreciate all of the miracles that the Almighty has performed for the Jewish people in the last 3800 years. Some of the miracles, like the splitting of *Yom Suf* were open for all to see. Others, like the survival and salvation of the *Klal Yisrael* through 2000 years of *golus* (exile) against all odds and natural phenomena, take a bit more contemplation to appreciate. The stunning events of the destruction and rebirth of the Torah world in the last century defy all natural explanations. Yes, Avi, we have ways of strengthening our *emunah* that were not available to any generation before ours.”

“That is so inspiring, Abba! The generation of the *Mishkan* had the open miracles in front of their eyes to give them *emunah* in Hashem. I have over 3000 years of miracles to give me *emunah* in the Creator. My praise of Hashem can grow and grow with the sheer number of miracles that I appreciate!”

“May we see and appreciate more and more miracles in our days!”

“Amen!”

Kinderlach . . .

We can understand our appreciation of Hashem with a parable. A skilled glass blower makes many types of pitchers, bowls, glasses, and other vessels. They each bear his unique style and are signed with his logo. If a client walks into his shop, he can appreciate the skill of the glass blower by studying the artisanship of the glassware he has created. Someone with a magnifying glass can see the intricacy of his fine, precise handiwork. If the glass blower is a young man, he may only have a few examples of his work. However, if he has worked for years, he has shelves and shelves of examples of his master craftsmanship. So too it is with the master Creator. The entire universe is His handiwork. We have microscopes, telescopes, computers, and all sorts of tools to study and appreciate the glory and intricacy of His master craftsmanship. We also have the history of 3800 years of miracles, both open and hidden, to reveal Hashem’s master guidance of events. How awesome is Hashem! How wondrous are his ways! Our appreciation for Him grows and grows!

