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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

DIRECTOR
TAL



TWO IS BETTER THAN ONE!

An ignorant patient once approached a doctor asking for his analysis on his brain. The doctor examined the patient and told him, "I'm sorry to tell you that your brain has two halves."

The left half has nothing right in it, and the right half has nothing left in it."

Many times through life we don't seem to be reaching out to our full potential – we seem to be filling the glass only half, at others we are completely empty, only occasionally do we reach our target. How can we go for and realise that potential?

Let us take some insight from this weeks Parasha.

The Torah relates about the upkeep of the temple in the wilderness (Mishkan) via a collection of Machatsit Hashekel (half shekel).

Every man, whether rich or poor had to give half a shekel contribution to the Mishkan.

Our sages ask many questions on this episode; let us concentrate on a few.

Why they were commanded to give half a coin? What was the symbol of this half?

Furthermore when it came to this half a shekel, it seems that even Moshe was confused.

Rashi cites a Midrash that Moshe had difficulty envisioning this. Hashem showed Moshe the appearance of a coin made from fire weighing a half shekel and told him "This is what they shall give."

After this Moshe understood, but why did Hashem show the coin specifically to Moshe as a coin made of fire?

The Alshich Hakadosh explains that Hashem wanted to portray an important message to the entire congregation. Everyone had to give a half a shekel as opposed to a whole shekel, to imply that Am Yisrael is only whole, when we get together. Two halves that join together make one.

In our single status we are not complete.

When Hashem first created Adam, it was a combination of man and women. Hashem then split Adam and Chava, and the duty of every man since then is to find his soul mate, to settle down and get married. For this reason the Talmud calls an unmarried man a Palga Ish – half a man. When two halves combine a whole is created. Similarly when we all join in unity then we are a united force, otherwise we are divided and only worth half.

The Admor Mibohush Shlita gives an awesome insight as to why Moshe was shown a coin of fire.

Every Motsei Shabbat at Havdala we light a candle and bless Hashem – Borei Morei Haeish – for creating fire.

Why do we bless Hashem on Motsei Shabbat for creating fire?

Our Sages explain that when Adam sinned he lost the merit to stay in Gan Eden, yet Hashem in His mercy allowed Adam to stay there for Shabbat. As soon as Shabbat was over, he was banished and entered a dark world. ►

ADAR 17th 5780

SHABBAT BEGINS: 5:47 PM

SHABBAT ENDS: 6:50 PM



THE WEEKLY QUOTE

"Happiness is being content with what you have, living in freedom and liberty, having a good family life and good friends."

> UPCOMING EVENTS

- 20th March Student Friday Night
- 25th March Busy in Brooklyn

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DVAR TORAH

Two is better than one!
RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL

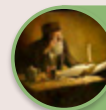
P1



DVAR TORAH

A Calamitous Confusion
RABBI DOV LEVY

P2



OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI ISRAEL HAGER

P3



HALACHOT

Which Beracha Does One Recite Over Garlic? RABBI ELI MANSOUR

P3

This newsletter contains Divrei Torah and may contain Sheimot - Please dispose of accordingly

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He was alone and didn't know how to bring light to this darkness. He prayed to Hashem and He informed him that by taking two stones a spark could be created.

Hence fire was 'created' by man on Motsei Shabbat, and as we enter the new week, we thank G-d for this creation.

Take a look at a stone, what do you see?

Not much!

Perhaps you can use it as a door stopper, yet on the inside it has the ability to create fire.

Can it do this alone?

No. In order to create fire, there has to be two stones rubbing away at each other.

This says the Admor is why Moshe was shown the coin in fire.

Its value would be half, in order to emphasise that in order to reach your full potential you must join with others. Team work and unity amongst Am Yisrael are essential.

But there is a further dimension – that of the individual;

In relating to the artisans that would build the Mishkan, Moshe was told 'See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri...'. Betsalel was a man 'filled with the spirit of G-d, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge'.

Yet this is the first time we are introduced to him. We have no recollection of who he is beforehand.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein Zts'l asks why Hashem told Moshe to 'see'. How was he supposed to see, if he didn't know this person before.

Rabbi Feinstein Zts'l gives an awesome answer.

Everyone is created with fantastic qualities. We each differ in our blessings. But we have to know and understand those blessings and if Hashem has blessed us, we should 'see' that this blessing is for a reason. If we have great potential it is because Hashem created us that way in order for us to do great things.

Look at that potential and go for it.

Moshe was told – look – see, I have blessed Betsalel for a reason. He has great intelligence and understanding and he is the one that will be able to build the temple.

Thus the Parasha emphasises the individual together with the whole.

Each of us has incredible potential; we should introspect and understand that potential in order to bring it to light. But at the same time we should comprehend that the potential also requires joining others in unity. For as King Solomon wisely stated – two are better than one.

■ Shabbat Shalom

RABBI DOV LEVY



A CALAMITOUS CONFUSION

In this week's Parasha we are told of the terrible calamity of the worshipping of the golden calf. As Moshe Rabbenu receives the *luchot* from Hashem atop Har Sinai he is told Shemot (32:7) '*Lech red ki shichet amecha* - Go descend for your nation has ruined'. Moshe Rabbenu then descends Mount Sinai to witness the Jewish people worshipping the golden calf.

The Chida questions the additional expression 'red – descend!', 'Go for your nation has ruined' would seem sufficient, the term 'red' seems superfluous.

The Chida answers that the word red (*Resh Dalet*) alludes to the core of the sin of the golden calf. The passuk towards the end of the Parsha says: '*Lo tishtachave le'el acher* – do not

bow down to God's of others' (Shemot 34:14) where the word Acher is written with a large *Resh*. In Parashat Va'etchanan in the Shema, the word Echad is written with a large *Dalet*. Acher and Echad are both spelt Aleph Chet and only differ in the final letter – *Resh* and *Dalet*. Misaligning one's beliefs even slightly can be the difference between Echad, The One G-d and Acher – avodah zarah. Ascribing true power and ability to beings other than Hashem is at odds with His oneness and is the nisayon of avodah zarah.

Before Adam Harishon sinned there was clarity, not a shadow of a doubt that all forces, powers, beings and entities gain existence and ability from Hashem, the one power and root of everything. There are no opposing forces and even evil is a force created and maintained by Him. Once Adam sinned a perception formed of the existence of possibilities which don't conform to Hashem's will. Because of this the universe was cursed with thorns and thistles – in Hebrew '*Vekotz vedardar*'. This new reality of a world devoid of the previous clarity, where opposing forces seem to exist, is summed up in *dardar* - *Dalet Resh Dalet Resh*, the two letters are confused thus Echad and

Acher are confused. The difference between Dalet 4 and Resh 200 is 196 – *Kuf Vav Zadi* - Kotz. By sinning Adam Harishon brought Kotz and *Dardar* into the world, a lack of clarity as to who is the life force of absolutely every possible energy in the universe, and this is the root of avodah zarah. That same mistake was repeated at Har Sinai as Hashem said to Moshe Lech *red* ki shichet – they have ruined the red, confused the Dalet and the Resh yet again and served avodah Zarah.

Sowing the seeds of confusion and doubt in true Emunah of Hashem's oneness is the task of Amalek. Hashem proclaims after the war with Amalek '*Milchma LaShem BaAmalek midor dor* – Hashem's war with Amalek for every generation'. Again, the war is dor dor Dalet Resh Dalet Resh, a war to re-establish the clarity of early times, before the sin of Adam Harishon. We pray that Hashem will give clarity to see Him always and only rely and trust in Him – Chadash Yamenu Kekedem, take us back to the former days with the coming of Mashiach bimhera beyamenu Amen!

■ Shabbat shalom

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OUR CHACHAMIM

RABBI ISRAEL HAGER - THE AHAVAT ISRAEL OF VIZNITZ

Rabbi Israel Hager was the son of the saintly Rabbi Baruch of Viznitz (may his merit protect us all), and a descendant of the Ahavat Shalom of Kossov, Rabbi Naphtali of Ropshitz, and the great Maggid of Mezritch, Rabbi Dov Ber. Rabbi Israel was recognized for his refined character early on in life, and he was always quick to help those who were afflicted or depressed. Apart from this, he was known to spend all his hours immersed in Torah study and the service of Hashem.

When his father the Rebbe of Viznitz passed away in 5653, Rabbi Israel assumed the leadership of the community.

As the new Rebbe of Viznitz, he revealed himself as a very lofty individual, one who shared in the pain of both the community and the individual, and who rejoiced with each and every person.

From every neighboring province, multitudes came to him in order to stand in his shadow. Opening his Beit Midrash of Viznitz, the chassidim of Romania saw in him a great leader, a father, and a protector. He poured out his soul before Hashem in prayer,

especially on festivals and the Days of Awe. His melodies took root among his chassidim, and they are even sung to the present day. They also found a place within the greater Chassidic world. In 5665 the Rebbe founded the famous Viznitz yeshiva, which today continues his work throughout the land of Israel, especially in Bnei Brak.

In 5678 he went to live in Grosswardein, where he remained until his passing. Rabbi Israel Hager served as the Rebbe of Viznitz for many years, until his soul ascended to the celestial academy on Sivan 2, 5696.

He left behind four sons: Rabbi Menachem Mendel (Av Beit Din of Vishiva), Rabbi Eliezer (Av Beit Din of Viznitz), Rabbi Chaim Meir (Rebbe in Bnei Brak and father of the present day Rebbe of Viznitz Shlita), and Rabbi Baruch (father of the Rebbe of Seret-Viznitz Shlita).

After the Second World War, Rabbi Israel Hager's remains were moved to the Zichron Meir cemetery in Bnei Brak. May his merit protect us all. ■



HALACHOT

RABBI ELI MANSOUR

WHICH BERACHA DOES ONE RECITE OVER GARLIC?

In the times of the Talmud, people customarily ate garlic raw, without first cooking or grilling it. And so the Gemara establishes that if one eats raw garlic, he recites the ordinary Beracha of "Boreh Peri Ha'adama," whereas if one eats cooked garlic, the garlic is "downgraded" to the Beracha of "She'ha'kol," since cooking garlic was seen as having a detrimental effect on its taste. (Tosafot explain that although cooked garlic is often flavorful, this is due to the ingredients with which it is cooked, but intrinsically, cooking has an adverse effect on the taste.)

The Mishna Berura (Rav Yisrael Meir Kagan, 1839-1933) noted (in Siman 203), however, that people in modern times do not generally eat hard, sharp garlic without first cooking it. Therefore, he writes, nowadays, one who eats raw garlic would recite "She'ha'kol," since he is eating the garlic in an unusual manner. This was also the ruling of Hacham Ovadia Yosef.

As for cooked garlic, the Shulhan Aruch follows the Gemara's ruling, that one recites "She'ha'kol" due to the detrimental effect of cooking on garlic, and this ruling is cited also by Yalkut Yosef from the Kaf Ha'haim (Rav Yaakov Haim Sofer, Baghdad-Jerusalem, 1870-1939). However, the Mishna Berura, as mentioned, established that a food's status depends on the conventional eating habits of every time and place. This principle should, presumably, affect the status of cooked garlic, just as it affects the status of raw garlic. Today, it is clear that people enjoy cooked garlic, and in fact it is often served as a popular delicacy in hotels and at affairs. Stores even sell readymade cooked garlic, and it is also common for people to grill garlic on a barbeque. Therefore, as this has become the normal way of eating garlic, it would stand to reason that nowadays, the Beracha over cooked garlic would be "Boreh Peri Ha'adama."

Summary: Nowadays, when garlic is commonly eaten cooked or grilled, and is generally not eaten raw, one who eats cooked garlic recites the Beracha of "Boreh Peri Ha'adama," and one who eats raw garlic recites the Beracha of "She'ha'kol." ■

TAL IMPACT

Thank you TAL for my winning Tickets to the Friday Night Dinner in Bridge Lane. I had a wonderful evening with great company, sophisticated atmosphere and traditional Shabbat dinner. It is always a great evening meeting so many new people, looking forward to the next event. *By Rutie Gross*

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