

Pulse OF Emunah

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life

LESSONS

ALL HIS CHILDREN

Rabbi Avrohom Abba Freedman was one of the early *mekarvim* of the frum community of Detroit.

He once convinced a young man to learn in yeshivah rather than attending college, much to the dismay of the young man's father.

The furious father exploded. "I have a younger son who is much smarter than the older one, and I certainly won't send him to your yeshivah!" he shouted at Rabbi Freedman angrily. "You may have gotten the older one, but at least I will get the younger one!"

But he was wrong. His younger son, too, begged and pestered his father until the father was forced to relent. The younger son, too, was sent him to the yeshivah.

The next time the father encountered Rabbi Freedman, he was seething with anger.

"I see you got both of them," he snapped.

"No," Rabbi Freedman replied calmly. "They are neither mine nor yours. They belong to the *Ribbono shel Olam*."

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OF THE WEEK

GUARD YOUR SOUL

By Rabbi Moshe Pogrow

Our entire lives rest on one basic fact: that our entire nation witnessed Matan Torah. This fact, proven by the evidence of our senses, must remain alive forever in our hearts and minds, and must be handed down to our children so that they, too, may take it to heart and pass it on to future generations. A personal experience, perceived simultaneously by an entire nation, is the unparalleled, unique fountain for Matan Torah. The transmission by an entire nation from parents to children represents a similarly unique, unparalleled preservation of that experience in the basic awareness of all future generations.

Non-Jews develop their approach to history and nature without these two facts: the existence of one G-d, and the giving of the Torah. We, however, when we study science or history, base our arguments on facts known to us through our experience. In a world caught up in notions with shaky foundation, we maintain our intellectual independence.

But above all, *shmor nafshecha meod*. Once G-d has vanished from nature,
continued on reverse side

powerful
PRAYER

VESHINANTAM LEVANECHA:
OUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY



Since the day that Am Yisrael received the Torah on Har Sinai, our number one priority has been its transmission to our sons. Without children continuing to learn Torah, all of Judaism would be lost in one or two generations.

There were many *reshaim* who ruled Eretz Yehuda in our history, but one of the most evil was Achaz. In an effort to destroy Torah and *mitzvos*, he forced all *yeshivos* to close, especially those of young children—the *tinokos shel beis rabban*. Achaz knew that without Torah learning, Yiddishkeit would be no more.

Adapted from Emunah in the Classroom

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ENGAGING THE MIND

By Rabbi Dovid Sapirman, Dean, Ani Maamin Foundation

In this week's *parsha* comes the *pasuk* that we recite at the conclusion of almost every *tefillah*: “*Veyadata hayom*, you shall know today and answer to your heart that Hashem is G-d—in the heavens above and on the earth below, there is none other.”

Not only must we *believe* in the Creator and His sovereignty over everything in the universe, we must *know* that it is so. We must not merely assume this belief system out of habit, because we were raised by *frum* parents and went to yeshivahs and Bais Yaakovs. To *know* something means to have clarity and conviction, to process the evidence, with no doubts. The Torah wants us to engage our *seichel* so that we know the truth.

The first step to awareness of Hashem's presence is realizing His plan and purpose in creating the world, which can be found everywhere you look. When drinking a glass of water, in addition to one's gratitude to Hashem for satisfying his thirst, let him remind himself that every liquid on earth become denser and heavier as it freezes—except water, which becomes lighter. If water were to become dense like everything else, the frozen water would sink, exposing the remainder of the water to the cold. In all the lakes and rivers, the top layer of ice would sink, and then the next layer, and then the next. Every waterway would become a solid block of ice, and all aquatic life would perish. And so the Creator, the One behind every rule of nature, crafted this exception to His framework. Such similar observations can be made everywhere: plants, animals, atoms, outer space, and everything in between.

If we would focus on these miracles of “nature,” we would quickly see how easy it is to use one's *seichel* and build a worldview out of the truths that we have received from our parents and the generations before us. 🔥

it is man's nature that dominates, and he worships his passions and urges. Just as we guard against un-Jewish outside influences, we must guard us from ourselves. Above all, we must guard our spirituality, never forgetting the events our own eyes saw, so that our foundational truths are handed down to our children with certainty. Let them know what you saw, and your experience will become the foundation for all your descendants.

Indeed, this is the only way facts can remain authentic even to one's remotest descendants. The truth of written records rests on the fact that their contents have been handed down by all fathers to all sons, and are beyond doubt.

So, for the sake of your souls, keep away from outside influence and remain faithful to your calling. We must preserve the purity of our belief that the one G-d is imperceptible, yet real and personal. We are warned not to blur this concept by assigning physical attributes to G-d. We are commanded to watch ourselves, so that nothing ever causes us to stray from this belief.

Aside from G-d, there is another invisible, imperceptible being whose existence is nevertheless certain: the soul. The soul that understands itself can grasp the existence of an invisible, imperceptible Being. Aware of itself, it also knows G-d. Just as we are sure of our own existence, so we are sure of G-d's existence.

Our sages say: as G-d fills the world, the soul fills the body. As G-d sees but is not seen, the soul sees but is not seen. As G-d is pure, the soul is pure. The soul bears the body, and G-d bears the world. The soul outlives the body, and G-d outlives His world.

This is why we must keep ourselves open to the influence of the soul. The soul knows that what cannot be seen is more real than what can. 🔥



wonder WORLD

SOUND BITES



How do we hear sound?

In Parshas Vaeschanan, we read the words Shema Yisrael—“Listen, Yisrael!” But what does it really mean to hear? How does sound travel from the world around us into our brains?

Sound is created when something vibrates, like a bell ringing or a voice speaking. Those vibrations move through the air in waves. When they reach your ear, they travel down the ear canal and make the eardrum vibrate. Tiny bones in the middle ear transmit the vibration to the cochlea, a snail-shaped organ filled with tiny hair cells, each responding to a different pitch. Those hairs send signals to your brain through the auditory nerve, which decodes them into sounds you recognize, like music, footsteps, or someone saying “Shema.” 🔥

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