

Pulse OF Emunah

ANI
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life

LESSONS

A SOLDIER'S GRAVE

Adapted from Touched by a Story by Rabbi Spero, with permission of the copyright holders, Artscroll/Mesorah Publications, Ltd.

Yehudis and Joanne walked up Har Herzl to their brother's grave. Daniel Haas, Hy"d, had been killed in an ambush in Lebanon in 1982. As they walked, they saw an elderly Sephardic man suddenly stumble and fall. They ran over, calling a nearby soldier to help. Then they continued on to the *kever* to say *Tehillim*.

The old man stood nearby, staring at them. Finally he approached and asked why they were at this grave. They told him that they were this soldier's sisters.

"That's impossible," the man said. "This *chayal* was a *chayal boded*, a lone soldier, with no family in Israel."

"When Daniel was killed there was no family in the country," Yehudis explained, "but we moved here afterward. How did you know Daniel?"

The man explained that his son had been Daniel's commander. "My son told me he had no relatives here. Every year he arranged for a *minyán* to come and say *Kaddish*. Since my son was killed in battle, I have continued the tradition. I never knew you were here... Will you make sure *Kaddish* is said for him?"

When the sisters promised, this elderly Jew walked over to the *kever*, looked up to Heaven and with his arms raised he cried out, "*Ribbono Shel Olam*, You know how faithful I was to this *niftar*. Today I give this responsibility over to his sisters."

He looked at them once more and walked down the hill. A few months later he passed away. The family would never forget the kindness of a simple Jew who cared for a *chayal boded* like his own son.

And neither will Daniel. *Hashem yinkom damo* 



gem

OF THE WEEK

SHAPING THE FUTURE

Based on excerpts from the commentary of Rabbi Shmshon Raphael Hirsch zt"l on Chumash, with permission from the publisher

The *Yamim Tovim* in Nissan and Sivan remind us of the Divine source of all we have: freedom, land, law—as well as what these elements produce: the prosperity of the community.

Pesach with its *Omer* and Shavuot with its two loaves are the constitution festivals of the Jewish nation. Tishrei, however, is a month of contemplation and introspection.

In Tishrei, we examine our relationship with these elements of our prosperity, and we ascend to the heights of purity and truth, for only through them can the blessings of life be realized.

Rosh Hashanah does not commemorate gifts received from Hashem. Rather, it calls us to work on ourselves. Its special *mitzvos* are *shabbason*, refraining from activity that alters the world and shapes our future; and *zichron teruah*

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powerful
PRAYER

ASKING HASHEM FOR HELP



There are many different kinds of knowledge. There is knowledge of *Torah*, of business, and knowledge of how to fix things that are broken. Simple common sense to make reasonable decisions in everyday life is also a very important type of knowledge.

So if you are learning with difficulty, or entering into a business deal, you should remember to ask Hashem for His help to put the right thoughts into your mind. The same if you are taking a test, or if someone asks you for advice. The ability to think and respond sensibly is all from the *ribbono shel olam* 

Adapted from Biur Tefillah (Ani Maamin Foundation)

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DID YOU DO YOUR BEST?

By Rabbi Dovid Sapirman, Dean, Ani Maamin Foundation

Chazal tell us about the after-death judgement of three people: the poor man, the rich man and the *rasha* (person of loose morals). The poor man will be told the story of Hillel's great sacrifice to learn Torah. He earned so little, that after he sent half to his home, he only had enough to pay the watchman of the *bais Hamidrash*, (which was out in the fields).

On a certain Shabbos night, the *gedolei hador* were going to be teaching through the night. Hillel had not earned anything that day, and hadn't the meager fee to pay the *shomer*, who refused to let him enter. Hillel climbed up on the roof and listened through the skylight. A massive snow fell and Hillel was covered with three cubits of snow.

So the poor man will be asked: Where you poorer than Hillel? Look at how much Torah he learned in spite of his poverty. The question is obvious: Does Hashem expect that every poor man can do what Hillel did? After all, we only had one Hillel.

Let me share a story I heard some years ago. The Klauzenberger Rebbe said that in the Holocaust he lost everything but the *Ribono shel Olam*. When he came to America, he wanted to rebuild his *mosdos* that had been destroyed. The great philanthropist of the time was Mr. Sam Fuerstein. Rav Shraga Feivel Medolowitz took the *Rebbei* to Mr Fuerstein to ask for his help in rebuilding these institutions. It wasn't an easy sell, but in the end Mr. Fuerstein said, "Rabbi, I'll do my best."

The Rebbe looked at Mr Fuerstein and said, "When I was Rav in Klauzenberg, I didn't know if I could carry my *talis* two blocks. Who would let the Rav carry his own *talis*? But when the Nazis came in, I discovered that I could carry fifty pounds of cement on my back for four miles. Mr Fuerstein, I am not sure that you have yet seen your best."

Now the words of *Chazal* are simply understood. No! Hashem does not expect every one else to do what Hillel did. But what they will say to the poor man, "Hillel did his best, in spite of his poverty. Did you do your best? If you had, you would have found some time to learn Torah."

When we come on Rosh Hashana with a promise to be a more devoted servant to Hashem, we need to bear in mind that we have to strive to be our best. Mediocre, even if it is better than before, is not enough. We all have to do our very best 🕯

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Teruah is familiar to us from *yovel*: a signal for people and property to be freed from outside ownership and returned to the mission assigned to them by Hashem. It is a call for far-reaching change in existing social relationships of men, a call to restore what was ordained by Hashem.

It is in the Name of Hashem, the sole Master of men and property, that the *teruah* calls for freedom. Hence, what produces the *teruah* is not the man-made trumpet, but the *shofar*, created by Hashem.

The *teruah* of Rosh Hashanah is also described as *bashofar*, sounded in the name of Hashem. And it has a similar message.

Whereas the *teruah shel yovel* affects the relationship of property and owners, *teruah shel Rosh Hashanah* affects the moral relationship of man and G-d.

It summons us to a moral *yovel*. It calls upon us to return to Hashem and to spiritual freedom, to recover all the spiritual assets that were once ours but which we have since lost through our sins.

Thus, it is also a signal for spiritual escape, to journey forth and give up the old ways that we have grown fond of but are unacceptable to Hashem.

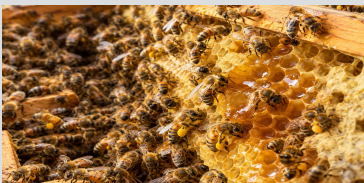
It calls us to a moral struggle against the enemy of our spiritual welfare, and assures us that Hashem will support us in our fight:

*venizkartem lifnei Hashem Elokeichem,
v'noshatem mei'oyveichem* 🕯



wonder WORLD

OUTLAST EMPIRES



What makes honey the perfect time capsule?

Inside a bee's special honey stomach, an enzyme called invertase breaks down flower nectar into simple sugars: glucose and fructose. At the hive, bees deposit this watery mixture into honeycomb cells and flap their wings like rapid fans. Depending on the weather and water content of the nectar, this exhausting group effort evaporates the water content down extremely fast. This extreme dehydration turns honey into a natural shield. Because it contains so little water, it violently draws moisture out of any invading microbe, destroying it instantly. Combined with high acidity and a built-in defense system that naturally generates antibacterial hydrogen peroxide, honey is entirely inhospitable to bacteria and fungi. It is the ultimate natural time capsule—so indestructible that archaeologists have unearthed 3,000-year-old honey that is still perfectly edible. By blending physics, chemistry, and biology, these tiny insects engineer a sweet, sterile super-food built to outlast empires 🕯